

Chapter 10

Some families may struggle more than others for several reasons including limited parenting skills, teen's limited skills and struggles through transitions, physiological changes, increasing influence of friends, changing or entrenched roles in the families, and parents' history. Managing conflict and stopping violence is always one of the top priorities. While parents with young children will need help managing tantrums, teens will escalate to violence more quickly. The first line of defense when a family member is escalating is to say little, because anything said would only be like throwing fuel on the fire. The best thing to do is to reflect on their feelings. If this does not work, the second line of defense is for the parents to call a halt to avoid further escalation.

It would seem as though the therapist has to do a lot of juggling between adolescents, adults, past, present, individuals, and families. The therapist's position in the middle of all of this means that their opening role is so important. Building a foundation of rapport with each generation is integral. The therapist's role needs to be clear while they build rapport, gain information, and maintain balance.

Chapter 11

One important question the therapist needs to answer is, "When to do what?" Issues of timing run alongside issues of depth and alongside questions of priority that are determined by hierarchy of needs. It is the ability to know when and how to approach a task or topic in relation to the family's readiness and foundation of skills.

In contrast to individual sessions with young children, sessions with adolescents are different because of the age difference and the shift from playing to talking as a medium of growth and healing. Not all adolescents are very vocal, and many are notorious for shutting

down and not talking at all. It is important to steer teens towards their less talked about feelings and concerns.

Chapter 12

Determining how the couple sees their role in the children's problems is important for the therapist, because it is integral for developing a treatment plan. A checklist of questions to ask yourself and them includes: What is the role of children in the couple relationship? How has the relationship changed over time? How adult are the adults? How are decisions made? What emotions are presented and how are they handled? How severe are the relationship problems? This clarity is important for the family to remain structurally and emotionally healthy.

Chapter 13

Most clients do not look at their problems in an interactive way. Rather, they look at it relatively one sided. The therapist should introduce the client to systemic thinking and the power of patterns. It is good to bring together all of the individuals who interact and play a role in the problem. This can occur by bringing in significant others for one or two information gathering sessions. Sometimes family members will not come in for sessions. Letting them know that their contributions would make a significant difference and personally reaching out to them may be useful.

Chapter 14

Staying sane is a challenge for even the most experienced therapist. In order to do this, it is important that the therapist treats themselves the way they treat their clients: sensitive and supporting of individual needs while maintaining growth. It is important for therapists to remember to diversify, control their time, be proactive about what scares them, allow themselves to relax during sessions, make an effort to spend time with colleagues, make the work space

enjoyable, remain centered, take vacations, have a balanced life, and have realistic expectations.

These this will help the therapist to stay sane and be the best professional that they can be for their clients.