

Take This Job and Love It!
Maintaining Morale in the Midst of Challenge and Change:
The Ten “A’s” of Job Happiness

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WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

During the workshop participants will have the opportunity to re-charge their “service” batteries. Through discussion, and a series of reflective and interactive exercises, we will examine some personal characteristics and practical strategies for staying “up” for the task of caring for hurting, troubled, and sometimes troubling children and young people. We will consider some necessary ingredients for staying energized for the challenge of providing care such as renewing our motivations, practicing tolerance, choosing assertiveness over passivity or aggression, choosing positive attitudes, and managing our moods, and maintaining our sense of humor. We will also consider some intervention practices that both increase our effectiveness in working with difficult children/youth, and improve our own morale, such as practicing empathy and assigning appropriate responsibility. Participants will be challenged to initiate and continue approaches to the stressful task of providing care that will enable them to stay both happy and healthy as they work not just to make a living, but to make a difference!

Target Audience

This workshop is appropriate for anyone involved in a particularly stressful job or a job that is experiencing stressful change, such as initiating program changes or adapting to outside pressures for change. It is also useful for staff in agencies or substitute caregivers such as foster parents and group home/treatment center workers as preparation for particularly difficult times (such as holidays or summers), or for any time helpers are feeling defeated and losing steam, or when a motivational "shot in the arm" would be appreciated!

Outcome objectives

- Discovers some personal characteristics that contribute to feelings of despair on the job
- Create practical strategies for staying “up” for the task of caring for hurting, troubled, and sometimes troubling children and young people
- Examine personal motivations for career choice
- Give examples of individual differences that cause stress in the work group
- Describe the ingredients of assertiveness as both an attitude and behavioral practice
- Analyze the creation of personal attitudes and how they affect morale
- Learns the relationship between personal attitudes and mood management
- Is able to point out the role of humor in maintaining morale
- Outlines the relationship between empathy and morale
- Designs plans for assigning appropriate responsibility between worker and client performance

Outline and Lesson Plan

8:30-8:50

I. Accepting responsibility for one’s career choice

Personal reflective exercise

Group sharing

8:50-9:10

II. Acknowledging individual differences

Group discussion

Personal examples

Individual exercises

9:10-9:30

III. Maintaining an Assertive approach

Analysis of work team approach to stress and confrontation

Analysis of learned approaches to stress management and confrontation

Instructor input

9:30-9:50

IV. Attitude control

Analysis of attitude development
Strategies for changing negative attitudes or maintaining positive attitudes

9:50-10:10

V. Affect management

Lecture and discussion

10:10-10:30

Break

10:30-10:50

VI. Allowing empathy

Review of research related to empathy
Case examples of relationship between empathy and morale

10:50-11:10

VII. Assigning appropriate responsibility

Group analysis of inappropriate assignment of responsibility
Analysis of relationship between assignment of responsibility and self-esteem

11:10-11:30

VIII. Accentuating the positive

Review of research related to curative powers of humor

11:30-11:50

IX. Acting – when necessary

Development of specific plans to remediate morale problems

11:50-12:00

X. Affirming one's effectiveness.

“Testimonies” and affirmations from the group to boost morale and create assurance of the usefulness of our work