Change Team Dynamics

In a work setting or any other location where teams are a part of the landscape — home, volunteer group, etc. — the dynamics are a critical component of effective progress and development. The purpose of teams is to create an atmosphere of working together to accomplish a completed task. In order to do this, it is a good idea to recognize some very important personal attributes which will help the team function towards the intended goal.

First, it is important to know who you are, and how your own values and goals affect the decisions you make. It is important to have your own values and goals, of course; however, it is also helpful to understand their impact on your working as a member of a team. Look at how your emotions and/or assumptions play a part in the way you behave within the group. Are there individuals with whom you have difficulty collaborating? Do you see that your colleagues have difficulty with your actions? Conversely, do you have difficulty with their actions? It is a good idea to evaluate what is driving you and understand what is driving other team members. Don’t act until you have this worked out within yourself.

Second, recognize your own behaviors and identify how they affect others. If there seems to be a serious division, pay attention to how the other group members respond to you and/or your suggestions. What could be behind their behavior — or your own for that matter? Is the behavior predicated on an inability to communicate? Is there a tendency to want to hold tight to old ways or, conversely, a determination to make everything “up-to-date” and ignore any reference to the old? Examine what could be behind the behavior, and take time to redirect your thoughts and assist other team member in recognizing just how important it is to understand their point of view while considering the views of others and working for a solution that allows for growth and development of the team as a whole.

Last, teams must be accountable individually and as a whole. In order to help the team change, it is important to recognize what you may have been doing wrong, and at the same time avoid placing blame on others within the team. Think clearly about what you can do to change, and when appropriate, address the need for all members of the team to be accountable. A team that develops both strong personal accountability and group accountability will be one that gets things done.

Successful teams are built on cooperation, understanding, and commitment of all members working toward success of the whole!!!
My Friend Needs a Friend

I am feeling the hurt my friend is experiencing – her child is struggling with addiction, and she is unable to stop blaming herself. What can be done to help her understand the power of addiction and the fact that it is a disease that is not due to what she has done or what she has not done? This is a troubling reality, and it should be understood that addiction knows no age, color, or economic class. It is a culprit that attacks people no matter what their individual circumstances might be. Searching for a way to address this need, I recalled a formula that I was taught in geometry class. All problems have a three-fold method to solving them. These are: Given, Required, and Solution. Let’s explore all three, and perhaps some ideas to assist in the help needed will come to mind.

**GIVEN:** The child is dealing with an addiction. As a result, the parents, family members, and close friends are also impacted by this dreadful disease. The addiction is the problem, and it is not a reflection on the parents and/or other family members. Additionally, as a friend, you want to be there for the troubled parent.

**REQUIRED:** To begin with, it is necessary to remember addiction is a disease, and it knows no boundaries. In order to be supportive, what can be done to help this parent come to grips with the situation?

**SOLUTION:** As that friend, remember you are not the solution to the problem. You are, rather, one who wants to help your friend in need. This is not unlike grief – everyone handles it in a different way. Your friend may want to talk, cry, or be silent. Respect that coping method – it is not for you to judge whether or not it is being handled correctly.

Be available to your friend. Let the talk flow from her. Whatever you do, don’t try to tell her how to handle it. She has already heard from everyone very authoritatively on that matter. If she needs to cry, help her do so. Have tissues at hand to help her flush out her hurt, anger, and frustration. If she wants to be silent, that is OK too – perhaps you might suggest taking a walk together, watching some old movie, or listening to her favorite music. Don’t interrupt her need to be quiet. It is frequently a way to cope with what is. Consider the fact that this is a loss, and it is subject to the grief that is associated with loss. What about bringing a specialty coffee or tea when you go to see her? If she is one who likes to read, a good book you have just read might put her in a more relaxed sense of the world around her.

Along with ways you can help, remember, you should never lay out a plan – unless you are asked – to “get over” the feeling. Be there. Be supportive. Allow her to reestablish herself in a manner that is reflective of her own needs.

**Professional help is available if she needs it.** She can contact her Employee Assistance program if one is available to her. Encourage her to consider doing so. If that is not an option for her, direct her to the Alanon Hotline at 402-556-1880.

If you need more help to be the friend you want to be, please call your EAP at Arbor Family Counseling (402)330-0960, or you can email us at Arborfamilycounseling.com. Our goal is to assist our clients in any way we can, and we are here to serve you.

---

**WHAT DOES ARBOR EAP HAVE FOR YOU?**

Professional, caring counselors who offer one-on-one confidential counseling for you and your family members for:

- Stress Solutions
- School/Work Issues
- Conflict Resolution
- Marriage and Family
- Time Management

Initial visits are free — paid for by your employer or school system.

**Call Today!**

11605 Arbor Street, Suite 106 | Omaha, NE 68144 | (402) 330-0960 | (800) 922-7379

www.arborfamilycounseling.com