



New Perspectives on Self-Control

Winter 2018

Dear Colleagues,

In 2017, Perspectives welcomed new therapists and developed new therapy groups which allowed us the opportunity to work with a variety of concerns impacting the lives of the people we serve. At the beginning of each year, we are reminded of new beginnings. We see new opportunity for growth, change, and development-both personally and professionally. We are filled with excitement and enthusiasm about resolutions and goals. As we begin 2018, Perspectives continues in pursuit of providing quality services which will help to enhance the quality of life for the individuals and families that we serve. We look forward to the opportunity to grow and expand our services. Based on the needs expressed by the community that Perspectives serves and the needs that have been identified by the professionals at Perspectives, the theme of this newsletter is dedicated to motivation and its associated barriers. Who doesn't need a little motivation to keep up the pace of "new year, new opportunities?" It is our hope that you will benefit from the knowledge and expertise in this newsletter. Additionally, it is my hope that you will be able to connect with and benefit from the wealth of knowledge and experience of over 35 therapists serving you at Perspectives. We are looking forward to working with you throughout 2018 and beyond.

Sincerely,

Joe Lilly, LMSW

Director of Anger and Behavioral Management

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

"WHEN CHILDREN DO NOT TRY"	GROUPS AND SERVICES	TIPS TO IMPROVE MOTIVATION
2	3	4

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When Children Do Not Try

By Michael Joy, MA, LPC

"He only wants to play video games." "She won't do her homework." "I'm at my wits end." These are examples of some of the comments I receive from parents when they are frustrated about how unmotivated their kids are. They often want to know how to get them to care, to see their future, as well as fear the consequences of their "laziness." As a therapist who treats children and teens, I often present the concept of motivation to parents as an issue that is complex and layered, which requires it to be looked at from different angles. It also can be related to anger and behavioral issues, due to the fact that kids tend to escalate their undesirable emotions when they are told to do things that they clearly do not want to do.

It is easy to look at a lack of motivation in defiant kids as a choice to be "lazy" as opposed to productive. The question is, what are the underlying emotions that facilitate this? Most experts in the mental health profession see one's ability to sustain motivation as a function of their confidence in their ability to produce and be successful, both for adults and children. When it comes to unmotivated and defiant kids, they do not wake up wanting to be this way. They often wish to be better and more productive in areas like school and chores, but have not convinced themselves they can be successful. When they are upset about this, they do not have the skills necessary to verbalize their emotions in an appropriate way to those around them.

This is where the specialists at Perspectives come in. When it comes to treating this type of issue, one of the first principles to establish is that neither the kids nor their parents have "messed up." Instead, it is important that skills are taught to not only help control anger, but to enhance motivation. We can all guess that kids can be motivated by tangible things, like toys or money, but how are we communicating to them to get them motivated? There is the great possibility that unmotivated and defiant kids have "given up" or that their outbursts are just masking their insecurity. The professionals at Perspectives can help give parents and caregivers the type of behavior modification techniques necessary to help with this kind of problem.

We can help motivate kids through language that is rooted in positive reinforcement. Situations in which a lack of motivation is present, such as refusal to do homework, may evoke a parental response like "Why can't you try harder?" Using language that is solution focused may elicit a better response from the child, such as "How can I help you?" and "What can I do so that you can earn your privileges?" Language that is solution focused is designed to help children think about the possibilities, instead of getting defensive when being "called out" for their mistakes. It gives a child much needed room in their mind to think and problem solve. When told "Good Job" for even the slightest of successes, it could very well give them the confidence to make an effort moving forward.



So how do we move forward with these kids? How can we motivate those who are not motivated themselves? The basic premise is that it is productive to validate and listen to our children who appear unmotivated, as opposed to continuously point out how they are messing up. Odds are, they already feel and know that themselves, so it is productive to focus on coming up with small and attainable goals to reverse the trend. The goal is to parent children more efficiently. If there is solution focused language being used, and if emotion is not driving the conversation, then motivation for kids can grow sooner rather than later.

Michael Joy is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). He works with children, teens and adults in the areas of anxiety, depression, ADHD, impulsivity, anger and behavioral issues, among many others.

GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS

ADULT & PARENTING GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS

Anger Management Group for Men

An 8 week group for men 18 years and older

Leader: Joe Lilly, LMSW

Codependency Workshop

For Men & Women 18 years and older

Leader: Karolyn Tompson, PhD, LPC

Navigating the College Experience Workshop

For new college students

Leader: LaTanya Carter, PhD, LP

CHILD & ADOLESCENT GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS

The Self-Control Group

Children & Teens who struggle with anger, hyperactivity, and impulsivity.

Leader: Joe Lilly, LMSW

Perspectives Academic Achievement Group

Building motivation, confidence & initiative in academically struggling high school students

Leader: LaTanya Carter, PhD, LP

Call to Register!

248-244-8644

Parenting Teens with Self-Injurious Behaviors

Leader: Leslie Johnsen, MA, LLP

Helping Parents Motivate Students

Leader: LaTanya Carter, PhD, LP

Parenting the Out-of-Control Child

Leader: Joe Lilly, LMSW

The Teen EDGE Group

Teens who struggle with depression and anxiety

Leader: Leslie Johnsen, MA, LLP

Stress Busters Workshop

For children who struggle with anxiety, worries, and fears.

Leader: Michael Joy, MA, LPC

Social Skills Group

Children & Teens with social anxieties and deficits

Leader: Diana Jennings, MS, LLP

All Groups are Currently Held at our Troy Location

888 W. Big Beaver Rd., Ste 1450, Troy, MI 48084

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Tips To Improve Motivation

Develop a prevention focus - People will work to prevent negative consequences from happening.

Develop a promotion focus - People will work to obtain things they feel will promote them socially, financially, emotionally, etc.

Use positive messages - People are more responsive to praise than they are to criticism.

Use start commands - People are more responsive when being told what to do versus what not to do. "Do your homework" versus "Stop playing games."

Use "if/then" statements - People need to use action first. Motivation builds after we start acting. For example, "If it's 2 pm then I'll do my homework."