Getting Real: A Program of Accountability and Restoration

Cheryl Como

From a session presented at "Dreaming of a New Reality," the Third International Conference on Conferencing, Circles and other Restorative Practices, August 8-10, 2002, Minneapolis, Minnesota

If you have questions or would like more information regarding the Getting Real Program, I can be contacted through the following:

Mailing Address: E-Mail: cac1@wilder.org Cheryl Como, Cognitive Skills Coordinator 1600 University Avenue, Suit 219 St. Paul, Minnesota 55104 Direct Office Number: 651-917-6221

The Getting Real Program

This curriculum has a restructure-oriented base. The focus is on participants identifying their attitudes and beliefs that give them the permission needed to follow through with the behavior, and the direct link between behavior and consequences. Participants explore, through various means, their thoughts and feelings and identify all consequences, not just the obvious ones, of their behavior.

Program Principles

Reality Check: identifies excuses and their function in perpetuating negative consequences to others and self

Honesty: stresses that eliminating blame, rationalization/justification, and excuses creates an environment that supports the opportunity for change

Accountability: emphasize the ripple effect of behavior in order to strengthen recognition for the need to change behavior

Responsibility: reinforces that how one lives their life is their job because there are consequences, and in order to achieve positive change, focus, effort and consistency are needed Program Philosophy

- Individual behavior matters, it affects others and self
- It's our job to pay attention to how we think and how we feel
- We are responsible and accountable for our behavior
- When we fail to hold ourselves accountable for our behavior, others will
- Change happens when we do the work needed to accomplish change

Group Activities

Activities include discussion, role-play, story telling, visualizations, and journaling work. Activities are aimed at increasing awareness of behavioral impact, and handouts support group discussions and activities.

However it is the "teachable moments", spontaneity and flexibility that are the benchmarks of this program.