

The Lytel Letter

Spring 2004

Issue 2

I write this newsletter with two purposes in mind: to tell you what kind of clients I work with in my psychotherapy practice; and to reflect briefly upon some clinical issues. For this Spring 2004 issue of the Lytel Letter, I focus specifically on working with adolescents.

I've been a therapist since I graduated from the University of Michigan School of Social Work in 1989. In Ann Arbor, I worked on an inpatient unit for eating disorders and ran a support group for suicide bereavement.

I've lived in Las Vegas since 1991, when I obtained my Nevada License in Clinical Social Work.

I work with adults, families, adolescents and children. My areas of clinical expertise include: teenagers struggling towards independence, family counseling, depression, self-esteem, children and trauma, post-traumatic stress disorder, foster care, adoption, women's issues, gay and lesbian issues, grief, loss, and suicide bereavement.

Teenagers Holding Jobs Less about money and more about responsibility

Is your teenager working? It might be helpful to think of a job as a critical developmental skill, rather than a privilege.

Entry-level jobs are about gaining a variety of skills necessary for a successful life; skills that we all have to learn.

This includes presenting oneself to prospective employers, completing job applications, showing up on time (every time), dressing appropriately and neatly for work, getting up and going to work even if you don't feel like it; saying "no" to friends who want to go out when you are scheduled

to work; working during work hours instead of talking with friends who come in the store, and responding respectfully to the boss.

In addition, teens begin to learn how to budget their money until the next paycheck and what it means to have taxes taken out of your check. (Parents, remember when you learned that lesson?)

*Think of a job
as a critical
developmental skill*

Groups offer social support to teens

Encourage your teen to join a group, and almost any one at that. Sports, dance, art, theater, chess, leadership clubs, choir, scouts, church, temple, karate, tai chi, cheerleading, band. It is so important for a

*Groups can help kids
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relationships*

teenager to belong to a group outside their family.

Groups can help kids form positive peer relationships, gain new skills, as well as insulate them from some of the more painful parts of adolescence.

Groups help occupy their time, and as we know, teens with lots of time and limited adult supervision may well be a recipe for trouble.

Some parents believe that their child should earn the right to hold a job, perhaps only if they are achieving certain grades in school. But in fact, your child will need to hold a job whether or not they perform well in school.

Many young adults will lose several jobs before they fully understand what is required of them to remain successfully employed. If your son or daughter might have trouble holding onto a job, isn't it better that he or she can experience some failures while still under your protective roof?

The more they are able to learn and feel good about self-sufficiency, the greater their chances for living a successful, independent life.

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Located near the intersection of Sahara and Rainbow in the southwest part of Las Vegas. Saturday appointments are available

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*Special Issue:
Working with Adolescents*

Insurance Questions?

I participate in these insurance panels:

- United Behavioral Health
- Health Management Center
- Clark County Self-Funded
- Universal Health Network
- Nevada Preferred Professionals
- Victims of Crime
- Victim’s Witness
- Beech Street

If I am not a preferred provider, I can assist clients with their out-of-network mental health coverage.



For an appointment, call
Laurie Lytel, LCSW
248-2020

Listening without Judgment

Many adolescents need something that seems deceptively simple: for us to listen with wholehearted, focused, and nonjudgmental attention.

I certainly do not mean that we do not guide teenagers in their choices. We do and should offer ideas, guidance, perspective, and suggestions.

But teens also need our direct eye contact and focus; for us to see them as they are and not who we might want them to be.

In talking with teens, try to focus more on content and less on process. I don’t encourage kids to use obscene language; yet, if a teen

swears while wrestling with real issues in a heartfelt manner, I think that is okay. It is more important to hear what is really bothering them than to let their language offend us. If we do not allow them to express themselves, how will we know what’s bothering them?

Many teens that I see bring in their poetry or songs because they speak to their struggles in some way. If they offer this to you, listen up! It is their authentic attempt to communicate strong feelings. Don’t miss your chance to hear them.