

Let's Talk

Season 1 – Episode 3

1. **Intro message** -

Welcome to Let's Talk... a podcast of the Office of Research and Child Well-Being to educate, provide updates and support the implementation of best practice within IL DCFS. Our goal is to provide valuable information that will strengthen well-being, the use of best practice within the field, and increase awareness of Family First programs and practices. We're glad you tuned in with us today. ... Let's Talk!

2. **Introduction**

- a. Michelle – Hello good people and welcome to Let's Talk where we chat about all things Motivational Interviewing. I'm Michelle Moreno ...
- b. La Tanya - and I'm LaTanya Riggs
- c. Together we have over 40 years of experience in child welfare. MI is one of the best practices we've encountered, and we hope you are ready to talk about Motivational Interviewing today.
- d. Before we get started with today's episode, we have an affirmation to share with you.

3. **Affirmation** – Lania

4. **Explanation of what's in store – La Tanya**

- a. Thank you Lania for today's affirmation. It was very empowering and a great way to open our conversation for today.
- b. As you know Motivational Interviewing or MI is a *collaborative, goal-oriented style of communication with particular attention to the language of change*.
- c. *Use of MI when working with children and families help us to avoid TRAPS that can hinder the process of change and damage the working relationship.*
- d. In our last episode we talked about the Righting Reflex Trap and ooohhhh was the conversation good! Today we will dive into the Expert Trap.

5. **Topic 1 – MI & TRAPS - La Tanya**

- a. **Definition:** In the Expert Trap, the professional dictates the process and plan TO the family instead of partnering with the family in the change process.
 - i. For example, you may meet with a family and as the expert tell them how things will go and what will need to be done to reach the case plan goals.
6. When we are utilizing good MI skills, we work WITH the family to support them through the change process which includes the family having a real voice and a choice in reaching their goals. So, let's talk about how we know when we are falling into the Expert Trap.
 - a. **Supporting points:** Here are four examples:

1. We may be falling into the Expert Trap when we Set the meeting agenda for the family instead of discussing options with the family and coming to an agreement.
2. Another example is Using only a formal assessment, like the Integrated Assessment or CANS, to determine the family's needs and not asking the family what they need.
3. The third example of the Expert Trap is Giving unsolicited advice or sharing stories on ways to handle their needs.
4. Saying things like: "I've been doing this for a long time... Or if you'd just do what I say..."

The Expert Trap can creep into our conversations subtly and in response the family may sit back and wait for you as the expert to tell them what to do. Relying on the professional to have all the answers is contrary to the spirit of MI and the principles of family-centered care. This can also cause you stress and you can begin to feel overwhelmed trying to solve all the problems on your own. **Both you and the family have expertise and should partner together to reach the end goal of the process.**

a. **Supporting quote**

ii. Japanese author, Ryunosuke Satoro said, "Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean."

b. **Transition**

iii. Michelle, we have talked about what the Expert Trap is, so how about we share with our listeners how to avoid this trap by empowering families.

7. **Topic 3 – What to do to avoid the Traps to build relationships with families - Michelle**

a. **Supporting point**

- i. To avoid falling into the Expert Trap we must empower families to use their voice and choice throughout the process.
- ii. Let's see how Empowerment can help us to avoid the Expert Trap.

b. **Supporting data**

i. So just what do we mean by Empowerment. It means helping people to draw on their own ability to change rather than falling into the EXPERT Trap.

c. It's important to empower families to:

1. reduce discord, and focus on building relationships, during the process of change.
2. promote family voice and choice.
3. decrease ambivalence, while increasing families' confidence in change.
4. And help more children return or remain home.

- ii. How can we empower families?
 1. Express empathy
 2. Develop discrepancy – sounds good right? What does that mean? It means that you help families to identify their goals and help them to see how their actions support or go against their own goals.
 3. Roll with the discord – don't try to persuade, coax or convince families to change. Instead empower them by using your MI skills to elicit their own reasons for change.
 4. Support Self-efficacy and Optimism – That doesn't mean you have to become a cheerleader. A skilled MI professional is more subtle. By really valuing the family's self-knowledge and problem-solving skills, they are empowered to believe in their abilities.
- d. **Supporting quote**
 - i. *In a quote by author Janice Trachtman she stated, "Everything is within your power, and your power is within you." "*
- e. **Transition**
 - i. Empowerment supports success in the change process when we work together using MI.

8. **Topic 3 – Closing – La Tanya**

- a. **Main point**
 - i. To build meaningful and impactful relationships, empower others, build independence, and ensure families have voice and choice we will need to avoid the Expert Trap. Remember families are the expert when it comes to their family, and we are there to support and guide them through the change process.
- b. **Supporting data**
 - i. So, as you continue to move forward in your MI work with children and families, we will be here to support and guide you in your journey.
- c. **Supporting closing quote**
 - i. Our closing quote for this episode comes from the late, great Henry Ford and he said: *Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success.*
- d. **Segue**
 - i. We hope that you have enjoyed listening to Let's Talk MI and learning more about Motivational Interviewing.

9. **Outro – Michelle**

- a. Let's recap: Today we talked about The Expert Trap. We defined it, identified why it's important to stay out of the trap and how empowering families can make all the difference.
- b. In our next episode, we will continue to support you in your MI journey as we tell you all about how to avoid *The Question-and-Answer Trap and successfully implement MI*. Can't wait to talk soon!

10. **Call to action – Michelle**

In the meantime, if you'd like to know more, please visit www.motivationalinterviewing.org for more information.

We would love to hear from you too! So, Let's talk! Send us all of your thoughts, ideas and questions about Motivational interviewing in an email to DCFS.ORCW@illinois.gov. We may even choose your question to discuss in a future episode. We can't wait to hear from you!

11. **Closing Song & Message**

- a. Michelle – I'm Michelle Moreno
- b. La Tanya - and I'm La Tanya Riggs. We hope you enjoyed your time with us, and we can't wait for you to join us again on Let's Talk ... MI.
- c. **Sponsor & Disclaimer message:**
 - i. LaNia - The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services is providing the content of this podcast for public service training purposes only it is neither a legal interpretation nor a statement of DCFS policy. It does not replace professional advice. Reference to any specific product, service, or entity does not constitute an endorsement or recommendation by DCFS. The views or opinions expressed by employees, guests, trainers/facilitators, are their own and do not necessarily reflect the view of DCFS or any of its officials; their appearance on the podcast does not imply an endorsement of the views or opinions expressed or any entity they represent.