

BluesNews

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

While returning from a spring break vacation, a scant four hours from home, Terri Jensen and two other vehicle occupants were involved in a significant motor vehicle accident. The car Mrs. Jensen was driving was struck from behind by a truck in a late winter snowstorm. There were approximately 20-30 vehicles involved in all of the sundry collisions that occurred.

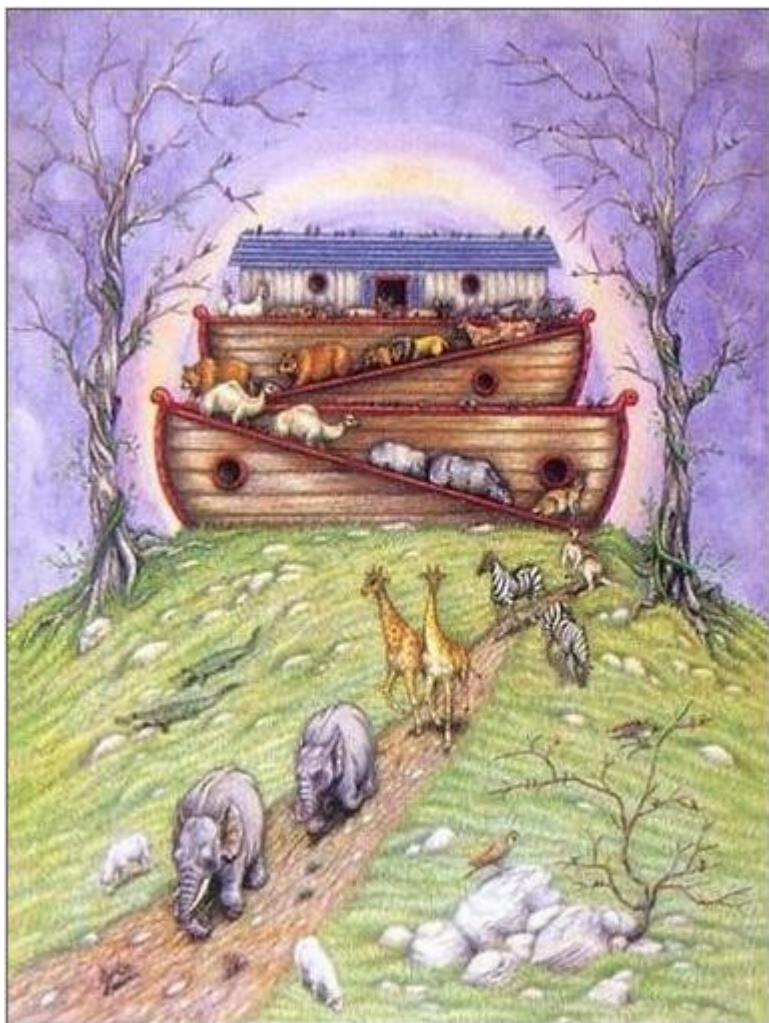
Terri's injuries, while not life threatening, will prevent her from resuming her work responsibilities for some eight to

ten weeks. Terri's absence will have a significant impact on our professional development training and consequently, on this newsletter. Terri is our only certified trainer on this material. Lisa Nemeth has provided talented assistance to Terri, but she cannot teach the course content. We will work out a plan to complete the 'Daring Greatly' training when Terri has recovered. BluesNews attempted to augment the "Daring Greatly" training. BluesNews will need to find a new direction for the "It's Not About the Nail" column.

In keeping with some of the training Terri has done, not every reader of BluesNews has earned the right to hear her story. Suffice it to say, every member of the Jensen household has experienced a significant trauma from which they will require time to recover. Our challenge, as a team, as a community, will be to respond in an appropriate trauma sensitive manner. It will require more than remembering that "it's not about the nail"; it will also require us to look at ourselves and whether

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EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW, I LEARNED FROM NOAH'S ARK

One: Don't miss the boat.

Two: Remember that we are all in the same boat

Three: Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.

Four: Stay Fit. When you are 60 years old somebody might ask you to build something really big.

Five: Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done.

Six: Build your future on the high ground.

Seven: For safety's sake, travel in pairs.

Eight: Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were onboard with the cheetahs.

Nine: When you are stressed, float awhile.

Ten: Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.

Eleven: No matter the storm, there is always a rainbow waiting.

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we have earned the right to hear the story of the Jensens' survival. We will need to watch for triggers (and not of the Roy Roger's variety).

All that, notwithstanding, the last piece of training we did with Terri was focused on highlighting some distinctions between shame, guilt, humiliation, and embarrassment. Dr. Brené Brown offers a very specific definition of shame: "the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore not worthy of love and belonging." Shame is to be distinguished from guilt. Shame amounts to, "I am bad;" guilt, on the other hand, "I did something bad." Bearing in mind Brown's definition of shame, the difference between shame and humiliation is that "we do not believe we deserve humiliation." Embarrassment? Embarrassment is often fleeting and in hindsight, frequently funny; embarrassment is a social phenomena for which one of its important social functions is to remind us we are not alone but are embedded in a social context in which we belong but the behavior may not.

This is really just a very simple way of saying these things. Brené Brown's work and Terri's teaching are much more nuanced than that which is presented here. The real value is intended to be found through participating in the professional development sessions, less from reading about them. I cannot overstate the value of participation: the sharing, the dark humor, the camaraderie, the knowledge, questions asked and answered...

All of the Bluewater families have aged with me; I have been here as everyone started. Darlene has been here since everyone started. The reason people care for troubled children is much more complicated than merely that of caring for children who need to come into care. Everyone Darlene and I have known to do this work has recognized that it takes more than simple love, patience and tolerance to be effective at this work; it takes something more. Darlene will attest to it, as I am sure John, Gillian, Lisa, Terri, Wayne, Joan would also. It takes something more to do this work. Everyone I know who is successful in this work, who stays in this work for any length of time, believes their love has the capacity to heal the harm done by others.

I find it amazing, really. Humbling.

Patience. Tolerance. Acceptance. Forgiveness. Quirky little strategies for managing behaviors. A willingness of spirit to love another when the vine that sustains them is withered and drying. I have seen too many monsters in too many homes become children in your care. Our job is getting tougher. The children for whom they now ask us to provide caring families are children who challenge the bonds that make families safe. There is an old saying, to the effect, "It's hard to remember your job was to drain the swamp when you are up to your ass in alligators!" No one needs to feel scared in their own home; yet, I suspect, the experience is far more common than you report to me. It is increasingly evident the children for whom we are asked to provide care are significantly frightened, and despite only a limited range of behavioral responses (frequently, rage responses), alter the balance of risks within families. Most frequently, children whose range of behaviour is so limited as to reflect only one or two primitive emotions, bonded prohibitively to the trauma of their lives, are overwhelmingly challenging within families.

Professional development: finding the willingness to risk, and the strength to heal. That is the reason all of you are here. (In your own fashion, each of you have told me that. Darlene is my witness.) Courage, in this work, is trusting the skills and knowledge you have acquired to lead to a win-win outcome. The greater the skill base, the greater the range of success. To hear fear in venom; to teach closeness, not rejection; to know when to 'smile and wave' are skills that can be learned.

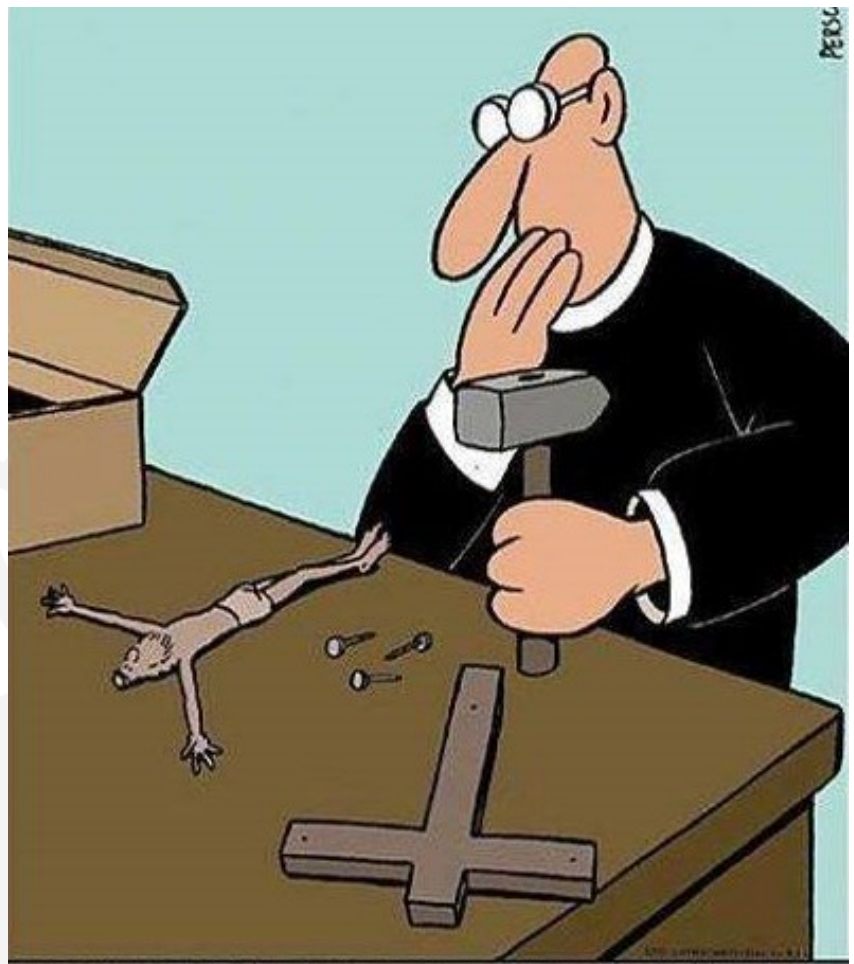
Professional development is our effort to help people accomplish the aspirations that led them to be drawn to specialized foster care. There are skills that can be taught and those skills are often extraordinarily useful in situations of stress and duress. Being a healer means more than possessing a magic wand and the requisite skill set; it means having practiced those skills, it means having learned a craft. It takes skill to become a capable healer.

Feeling powerless and frightened is not the experience foster families want when they come to this work and find Bluewater Family Support Services. They come to us to find strength and courage and the requisite knowledge and understanding to be effective. Daring Greatly is one set of such skills. As a community, we need to attend.

I am not going to elaborate further. For now, our "Daring Greatly" training is done. Our hope continues to be to offer a "Daring Greatly" workshop for community residents, especially targeting adolescents, in the early fall. Much of what Terri has taught so far is about finding the courage to be authentic in our interaction with others. Her training helps to illustrate some of the masks we hide behind, some of the strategies we use to play games with others. As I listened to Terri, I was frequently reminded of the work of others from the past: Melanie Klein, Love, Guilt and Reparation (1984); Eric Berne, Games People Play (1964); Sidney Jourard, The Transparent Self (1964) and a host of others. Unlike these authors from the past, Brown's work is research-based and solidly empirical. It appears to provide a foundation for an old Shakespearean quote, "To thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man."

Books by Dr. Brené Brown :

Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead (2012);
The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are (2010); and
I Thought It Was Just Me (2007).



Suddenly, Father Schober was not sure whether he really should have bought the new crucifix at Ikea.

HOW TO BE EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT

What makes a great leader? Knowledge, smarts and vision, to be sure. To that, Daniel Goleman, author of "Leadership: The Power of Emotional Intelligence," would add the ability to identify and monitor emotions — your own and others' — and to manage relationships. Qualities associated with such "emotional intelligence" distinguish the best leaders in the corporate world, according to Mr. Goleman, a former New York Times science reporter, a psychologist and co-director of a consortium at Rutgers University to foster research on the role emotional intelligence plays in excellence. He shares his short list of the competencies.

1. SELF-AWARENESS

Realistic self-confidence: You understand your own strengths and limitations; you operate from competence and know when to rely on someone else on the team.

Emotional insight: You understand your feelings. Being aware of what makes you angry, for instance, can help you manage that anger.

2. SELF-MANAGEMENT

Resilience: You stay calm under pressure and recover quickly from upsets. You don't brood or panic. In a crisis, people look to the leader for reassurance; if the leader is calm, they can be, too.

Emotional balance: You keep any distressful feelings in check — instead of blowing up at people, you let them know what's wrong and what the solution is.

Self-motivation: You keep moving toward distant goals despite setbacks.

3. EMPATHY

Cognitive and emotional empathy: Because you understand other perspectives, you can put things in ways colleagues comprehend. And you welcome their questions, just to be sure. Cognitive empathy, along with reading another person's feelings accurately, makes for effective communication.

Good listening: You pay full attention to the other person and take time to understand what they are saying, without talking over them or hijacking the agenda.

4. RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Compelling communication: You put your points in persuasive, clear ways so that people are motivated as well as clear about expectations.

Team playing: People feel relaxed working with you. One sign: They laugh easily around you.

Daniel Goleman, New York Times Newspaper, April 7, 2015.

WORDS TO LIVE BY, REDUX

"Give it, don't just get it."

"Most people walk in and out of your life, but FRIENDS leave footprints in your heart."

"Never call your mother-in-law names!"

"Never let someone-else's behavior be an excuse for your own."

"Reinforce the behavior you want to see, not the behavior you don't."

"Children are as well regulated as the **least** regulated of their caregivers."

If you always do what you've always done, you will always get what you've always got.

The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different outcome.

plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose
(the more things change, the more they remain the same)

HUMOUR :

Great Timeless Truths

In my many years I have come to a conclusion that one useless man is a shame, two is a law firm and three or more is a government.

John Adams

If you don't read the newspaper you are uninformed, if you do read the newspaper you are misinformed.

Mark Twain

I contend that for a nation to try to tax itself into prosperity is like a man standing in a bucket and trying to lift himself up by the handle.

Winston Churchill

A government which robs Peter to pay Paul can always depend on the support of Paul.

George Bernard Shaw

Foreign aid might be defined as a transfer of money from poor people in rich countries to rich people in poor countries.

Douglas Casey, Classmate of Bill Clinton at Georgetown University

Giving money and power to government is like giving whiskey and car keys to teenage boys.

P.J. O'Rourke, Civil Libertarian

Government is the great fiction, through which everybody endeavours to live at the expense of everybody else.

Frederic Bastiat, French economist(1801-1850)

I don't make jokes. I just watch the government and report the facts.

Will Rogers

In general, the art of government consists of taking as much money as possible from one party of the citizens to give to the other.

Voltaire (1764)

Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn't mean politics won't take an interest in you!

Pericles (430 B.C.)

No man's life, liberty, or property is safe while the legislature is in session.

Mark Twain (1866)

Talk is cheap...except when government does it.

Anonymous

The only difference between a tax man and a taxidermist is that the taxidermist leaves the skin.

Mark Twain

What this country needs are more unemployed politicians.

Edward Langley, Artist (1928-1995)

A government big enough to give you everything you want, is strong enough to take everything you have.

Thomas Jefferson

We hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office.

Aesop

If you think health care is expensive now, wait until you see what it costs when it's free!

P.J. O'Rourke

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say what?!

It's not uncommon to be overcome with emotion after listening to a particular piece of music. Sometimes a song makes you reminisce about old times and fills you with nostalgia and happiness. Sometimes a song reminds you of someone you've lost, and has you in tears. Regardless of the emotion evoked, it's no secret that music is powerful.

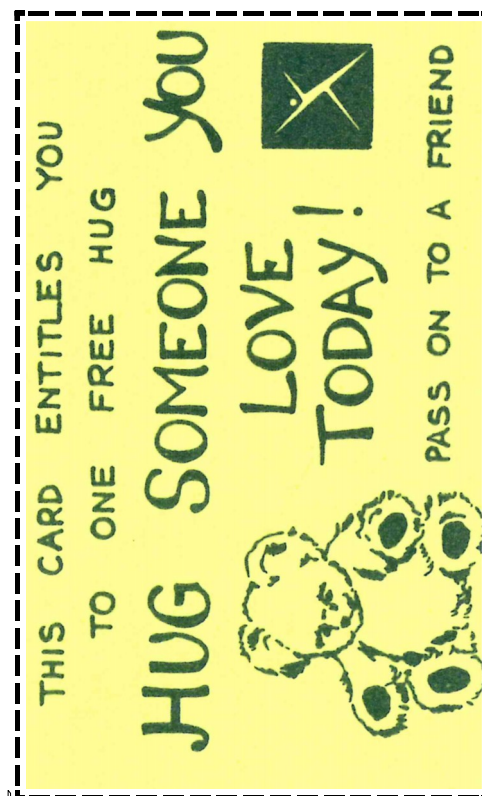
Youtube

[Am I Pretty Enough Now?](#)

[This I Promise You](#)

and for fun

[Rory and the Hurricanes](#)



Humor

Dear Abby:

I am a crack dealer in Orillia, Ontario who has a steady flow of customers from nearby schools. I have recently become engaged to marry a former Barrie prostitute who lives near Bass Lake and is still a part time "working girl" in a brothel there. My parents live in a suburb of North Bay and one of my sisters, who lives in Rama, is married to an transvestite. My father and mother have recently been arrested for growing and selling marijuana in Owen Sound and are currently dependent on my other two sisters, who are prostitutes in Coldwater. I also have two brothers. One is currently serving a life sentence in Drumheller for the murder of a teenage boy in 1994. The other brother is in jail on charges of sexual misconduct with his children in Orangeville.

All things considered my main problem is this: I love my fiancé and look forward to bringing her into the family. I certainly want to be totally honest with her. My question is, should I tell her about my cousin, who is a Leaf's fan?

For once, the BLONDE GETS EVEN.....

A trucker came into a Truck Stop Cafe' and placed his order. He said I want three flat tires, a pair of headlights and a pair of running boards.'

The brand new blonde waitress, not wanting to appear stupid, went to the kitchen and said to the cook, 'This guy out there just ordered three flat tires, a pair of headlights and a pair of running boards. What does he think this place is, an auto parts store?'

'No,' the cook said. 'Three flat tires... mean three pancakes; a pair of headlights... is two eggs sunny side up; and a pair of running boards... are 2 slices of crisp bacon!

'Oh... OK!' said the blonde. She thought about it for a moment and then spooned up a bowl of beans and gave it to the customer.

The trucker asked, 'What are the beans for, Blondie?'

She replied, 'I thought while you were waiting for the flat tires, headlights and running boards, you might as well gas up!