

# Behavior Guidance 5 of 5

## *Reflections on Success Counseling*

### When do you move from (1-6) to (a-f)?

The connection and understanding are the foundation on which the relationship stands. Without those, the (a-f) problem-solving phase is usually awkward and unsuccessful in creating a more powerful, enduring behavior/thought pattern. When the folks involved are balanced/grounded/not triggered, there is opportunity to move to the problem-solving phase. Although some heightened emotions can break free thought patterns to aid problem solving, it is a narrow path to walk with perilous drops on either side.

Finally, know that people may only need the first part (1-6), similar to the “Reading Minds” method. That may be the case either because there isn’t a strategy to work through, or because the person isn’t ready for the transition . . . needing time to sit with their needs and emotions. For example, when someone is grieving the loss of their just deceased dog, they are likely not ready for or interested in strategizing/thinking about shopping for another dog . . . time and space. And, all the person may need/want is to be heard, and/or share the space of that emotion; problem-solving may be entirely unnecessary, ever.

### How does this relate to other concepts/areas of the manual?

Consensus	The mindset and steps are the same, with the conversation occurring at the level of group.
Your Stoied Life & Rackets	Success Counseling is essentially learning a new story. Recognize that there are multiple stories, and help others to broaden their perspectives/stories using the Success Counselor, problem-solving framework (b, c, & d). And, know that you’ve got stories going into it as well – are your stories serving life/the relationship?
Ages and Stages	Language and nature of conversation shift to best create a true connection.
CAPP & Cabin Accords & Embers	These are Success Counseling conversations at the group level. The group is both an entity with its own feelings/needs, as well as being made up of individuals.
Leadership Styles	Success Counselor is a particular leadership style. Know which one?
Intentional Speech	Modeling and using intentional speech creates more powerful connections and results. For example, yes/no questions can be deadly or unhelpful when used for something other than as confirmation for feelings/needs guesses.
Challenge by Choice	Both with the person being challenged, and others inappropriately challenging the person.
Integrity	Aids rapport, trust, and connection. When out of integrity, use Success Counselor as an approach to collaborate on a new definition of the relationship and agreements.
Competition	Unhealthy competition is an invitation for a Level 1 or 2 conversation.
NVC	Remember that the first part (1-6) is essentially NVC. The “Five Basic Needs” from a couple pages ago are a high-level summary of human needs.
“More Communication Tools”	In particular, useful bits are: Helpful phrases, Strategies to begin conversation, Leave the rope and meet their heart, SEIEM, Giving advice, and I’m sorry.
Scaffolding	The four tools are directly related to Success Counseling skills. The tools are the mechanisms and framework by which Success Counseling occurs.
Flat Hierarchy	Approach the relationship as equals, and not with an air or attitude of superiority.

### What are some key rookie mistakes?

- Rushing through the process. We make time. All points of the day are available with the support of the community.
- Not establishing rapport and connection from the beginning
- Coming into the conversation with a path/end already determined
- Being unbalanced/triggered yourself when you enter the conversation, or during it
- Offering a feeling or need without phrasing it as a true question
- Using more than a single breath in phrasing your questions (beware the lecture!!)
- Asking “What did you want” in exactly those words. Name the “want” you heard in the NVC phase, or the similar future state/possibility that is moving/touching/inspiring.
- Following the steps in a lock-step manner. Sometimes you’ll skip one or some, and sometimes you’ll re-order them. For example, SEIEM works well for defensive/triggered adults, but it’s the same principle/method at heart.
- Getting tripped up by “Mystery Needs,” where there are other more pressing needs that are core to the behavior than the one(s) mentioned. It ain’t about X, but rather P, J, and U, even though X is the focus of the conversation.
- Diving into the past or history or story of what happened, rather than primarily focusing on the present, and eventually future.
- Stumbling on the “Communication That Cuts Off the Connection” strategies (NVC section on page after “Reading Minds”).
- Yes, with your 5 children, but also with all children. With your fellow staff. With families, friends, lovers, and “enemies.”
- Wanting to be perfect. Kicking yourself for not getting it right. Fear of doing it wrong, ruining a person’s life.

## What happens when Success Counselor doesn't work!?

About 95% of the time, it works well. Now, creating angels out of demons is a long process outside of the scope at Augusta, yet cracks in the façade/strategies that are not meeting needs of all concerned are often possible. Instead of “Work” – “Not Work,” view behavior/strategies/mindset as a broad continuum, and Success Counselor as a means of advancing along that continuum – sometimes quickly, sometimes very slowly. It may take a few minutes, days, or involve years.

If the pace or nature of change, if even notable, does not work for the needs of others, then the “Monitor” approach is the fallback position. The rough rule is “Do the needs of the individual outweigh the needs of the group?” If the answer is yes, then the Monitor approach is appropriate. However, some time away from the event (if possible) is helpful, as well as involving other people, like your Village Leader or others, to open up the mind to another way of being.

We **NEVER** use Punishments, Rewards, Guilt, or the Buddy approach with anyone at Augusta.

## But, I've got something to say!!

Great, you care! :)

Maybe you're passionate about helping the other person.

Maybe you're triggered and this is personal for you.

Maybe both are happening!

Figure out what's going on for you, and as needed, seek some empathy to get grounded before entering or continuing the Success Counseling conversation. You might need to take a moment, or a break, to allow your grounding to occur.

In a counseling frame, the rule is that whatever you say is best held to what you can say in a single breath.

What's unhelpful about lectures / soliloquies?

- ❖ Instead of sharing and examining “brain nodes,” you're making a deposit . . . in the right place? Will it stick?
- ❖ What did they pay attention to?
- ❖ What were they thinking about?
- ❖ What is their level of understanding? What holes exist in their scope?
- ❖ How is their motivation?
- ❖ If you're wrong about their experience, will you come off as arrogant and/or clueless?

What about my own self-expression for what's going on?

If it has any Jackal in it, the result is likely to be tragic and suicidal to your ultimate aims. Seek empathy elsewhere. It is possible to be forceful and Giraffe at the same time . . . an---nun---ci---ate your Giraffe clearly here.

And now, for a 180

- ❖ Sometimes telling a related story works. It's connecting and it broadens the mind. Now . . . in telling a parallel story or anecdote, you're making an offer which the other party can choose to agree to. You do this through telling the story and allowing the other person to seek out the points of resonance with his/her own story, rather than telling him/her that you've got a story that's “just like that!”. An effective story concludes with the OTHER person telling you what resonated for him/her and how HE/SHE can see the connections (the other person accepts, processes and owns the story). An ineffective story concludes with YOU telling the other person what SHOULD resonate with him/her. Instead of a moral, give them a mirror.
- ❖ Sometimes offering an analogy to change/broaden the frame is just what was needed.
- ❖ You're both triggered/involved in what's happening, and both of your feelings and needs are relevant. Although tricky and less likely to go well, it is possible to navigate this dance floor . . . intimate couples and best friends attempt it all the time! :-) An uninvolved third party may add perspective and an ability to offer empathy to both.

## Where does this come from anyway?

Primarily from counseling psychology, borrowing from several theories and disciplines simultaneously. To name a few: Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Glasser's Choice Theory, Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, Narrative Therapy, Motivational Interviewing, Brief Therapy, Non-Violent Communication, and Solution Focused Therapy. Why the name “Success Counseling?” Because, ultimately, that is what it is, and it sounds friendlier. :-)

## Where can I keep learning?

- Remember that (1-6) is essentially NVC. Opportunities = staff manual, NVC audio, NVC videos, numerous books in the camp library, live NVC workshops where you live, and more than a dozen hours of learning in staff training itself.
- Two supplements centered largely on (a-f) have been created by masters-level therapists to further your understanding. Read those.
- There is a “Level 3” process – ask for it if you're curious. It'll be presented to you when necessary. :-) Tough situations when a couple/handful of Level 2 conversations have not resulted in the degree of change necessary for the community.
- From one another.
- From your Village Leader.
- From the children.

# Mystery Needs

Things may not always be what they seem, my dear Watson.

*“Circumstantial evidence is a very tricky thing,” answered Holmes thoughtfully; “it may seem to point very straight to one thing, but if you shift your point of view a little, you may find it pointing in an equally uncompromising manner to something entirely different ...There is nothing more deceptive than an obvious fact.”*  
-Sherlock Holmes, *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*

## **The Set-Up**

In a legal setting, circumstantial evidence is used to try and reach a desired outcome indirectly, using inference and assumptions. In a murder case, for example, if there is no direct evidence linking the suspect to the crime, the prosecutors will use circumstantial evidence to try and make those links. For example, if there is nothing direct that links a suspect to the time and place of the murder, the prosecutor will ask a series of questions about where the suspect was *not* at the time of the murder, hoping to prove indirectly that the suspect was indeed at the murder scene because there was *no other place* the suspect could have been at the time, and also attempting to prove that the suspect would have had a motive and a reason to have been at the murder scene.

In many ways, understanding our own needs, as well as the needs of others, is similar to gathering circumstantial evidence: we observe something (an action or a thought) in ourselves or others, and we try to discern the needs behind that thing by using inference, assumptions, and questioning. We have a whole range of tools available to assist with identifying needs, including success counseling, empathetic listening, stories, knowledge, individual experiences, and, well, just about the entire Staff Manual! Though hopefully you are not confronted with a murder mystery during your time at camp...unless it's part of an evening program.

## **The Case**

Let's take an example. A Pine boy, Brett, is angry and loud following a game of Capture the Flag. Brett's team lost, and he is now yelling at the other team about how dirty they played, and is taunting his own teammates about how badly they played. Brett's telling his team that if only they would have played as well as Brett played, they most definitely would have won, and would've beaten that damn Red Team once and for all.

## **The Trial**

The success counselor steps in, and looks at the assumptions: the child is male, 9 years old, and generally seems to get along well with his cabinmates. The counselor knows that at this age fairness and fun are usually very important, and the counselor chats with Brett about a few things along these lines. “Help me understand what you felt was unfair.” I saw Bobby go back to his base, even though he was supposed to be going to jail...and some of the counselors knew this, too. “What happened when you perceived them to be playing unfairly?” I quit! How am I supposed to have fun when they are cheating, and the counselors are letting it happen?

And so it goes. The counselor's assumptions and questions are pointed in a certain direction, and the strategies that Brett and the counselor come up with to better meet Brett's needs are centered on these ideas of fairness and fun. Chats about fairness ensue, and evening embers with the cabin are had on the subject. The counselor has more discussions with Brett to find out what activities he really enjoys at camp, to focus down on his needs for fun. Action plans are developed, and Brett is back-in-action. Case closed!

Except it's not. Brett is continuing to lash out at his cabinmates for small things: “Jimmy cut in front of me for dinner! That's not fair!” Brett is in constant power struggles with other children in his clinics. More Level 2's are had, trying to get deeper with Brett on issues of fairness, and trying to find out other areas at camp where he may have more fun. Yet he continues to spiral down in ways that are harmful to himself and others around him.

## **Double Jeopardy: Re-Trial**

Sure, maybe needs for fairness and fun really are a part of the picture. But it's likely that something else is going on. Even though Brett appears to be independent-minded and strong-willed, perhaps he's really quite insecure about his social position at camp and wanting to feel more inclusion. Going back to Capture the Flag...his aggressive actions towards his own teammates may

have come from not feeling listened to or included when the team was discussing strategy. Perhaps Brett really does not like competition all that much, but he felt unable to express that sentiment in a safe way because both his teammates and the staff were taking the game so seriously; Brett felt isolated in his feelings, and was not able to connect to those around him. The list of possibilities goes on and on here; people are nuanced and complex.

Read the Holmes quote again at the beginning of this piece. Focusing in on an obvious need, and holding the line and strategy that come from that determination, may actually obscure some other equally valid, and perhaps more significant, needs.

### **Media Coverage: Relating the Trial to Society**

There is often a desire to believe the more “obvious” needs that appear, as the solutions and strategies for meeting those needs are more direct, and appear easier. In the case of Brett, finding strategies to meet needs for fairness and fun will likely seem easier than finding a strategy to help him meet a need for inclusion.

The types of complexities involved with Brett are quite common, and not just with children. If watching closely, it’s likely that mystery needs pop up in your life all the time. For example, is that really a need for you to be seen and heard underneath your feelings of sadness/anger? Or is it deeper than that, with a need for you to have meaning in your life?

It’s often easier to ask someone else to see you for your intentions, than to look deeper at that need and realize that your own identity and needs for meaning are intertwined with your feelings. It can be difficult to go deeper, recognize mystery needs, and admit that your initial thoughts and strategies were not as beneficial as they perhaps might have been.

### **Closing Arguments**

It’s often likely that many needs are in play. Fairness and fun may indeed be needs that Brett is having difficulty meeting, but they are tied to other, more immediate needs.

The good news is that there are some things we can look for, and some of it may be trial-and-error. Some needs are identified in response to specific behavior, either in you or another, and some strategies are employed to better meet those needs. Is the specific behavior continuing? Are things changing, either in a more or less beneficial way?

There are often physical and external signs to watch for as well. When guessing at needs, folks will frequently avert their gaze, frown, and have a closed and avoidant body posture if they’re not feeling heard or understood. There is often a physical shift that takes place in a person when they feel understood; their body posture will open up, and it’s common to watch a person’s head bob up-and-down in agreement when you guess at a need that resonates with them.

### **Post-Case Analysis**

And so how do we know if there are mystery needs in play? As in the case of circumstantial evidence, you’ll never know FOR SURE. People are still discussing and debating the OJ Simpson trial.

“Solved” behavior is one clue that you both got it right, but that’s not necessarily a smoking gun either. It is common in counseling for the counselor to manage to *convince* the counselee of their primary need, even if that wasn’t really it. Conversely, even if you do manage to discern the primary need(s), that does not mean that the planned alternative strategies to meet the needs will work, or stick.

Meeting needs is not a linear process. Rather, it is very thick, with lots of layers, reflection, listening, expressing strategies, and actions. And back through those layers again, in different orders. A dance, not a march.

After all, Watson, it is alimentary. (And if you’re unsure of what alimentary means, go sleuthing...it is not simply a clever slogan to close out the piece!)

# Bases of Power

## *POWER WITH, instead of POWER OVER*

Everyone working at camp is in a leadership position: counselors work with campers, VLs work with counselors and campers, PDs work primarily with the counselors and HEROES...and so on. "Power" is a strong word and one that often carries a negative connotation, especially when attached to personal interactions. "He overpowered her." "She threatened to fire him if he didn't stay late to finish that report." Considering where power comes from affects an individual's impression of it. Very few people are happily coerced, but almost all of us can think of a teacher (with expert and referent power) that had a positive and powerful affect on us. To have "power" is in itself powerful, and here we want to examine the different types of "power" in respect to having influence over others, and ways in which we can guide and lead effectively.

**Thought:** Consider power as influence. Is the influence welcomed or resisted emotionally or physically?

### ***Coercion***

Person A has power over person B because person A can administer some form of punishment to B. Verbal abuse, physical strength, and humiliation are also examples included under coercion. "If you don't get into bed right now, I'll tie you there."

### ***Reward***

Person A has power over person B because A controls rewards that B wants. Candy, bedtime stories, a fun cabin activity, more responsibility, new equipment, transferred power, etc. This leads to compliance, but not conversion. Also, there is a psychological heuristic that if one is compensated for something, one would not have done anyway, the act is not worth doing in it's own right - the over justification effect. "If you go to bed right now, I'll let you go first on the high ropes course."

### ***Legitimate***

When person B submits to person A because person B feels that A has a right to exert power in a certain domain. Often referred to as authority. Depends only on one's position and not the relationship between people. Derived from culture, social structure, or designated as in a president or director. This is the power being used when you say, "Because I said so!" When you don't know a child and you talk to (lecture) or discipline them, this is usually the base that is being used. "I'm the counselor here and I say you need to go to bed right now."

### ***Expert***

Person A gains power because A has knowledge or expertise relevant to B. Usually refers to a narrow area. "Did you know that there are studies saying that it is unhealthy to get less than eight hours of sleep at night? That is why it is necessary for you to go to sleep."

### ***Referent***

Person B looks up to or admires person A, and, as a result, B follows A largely because of A's personal qualities, characteristics, or reputation. Also called charismatic power. The respect and personal relationship helps the target to open their mind and examine their behavior and the means they are using to achieve a given end.

### **Typical reactions to utilized base of power**

Along a continuum



***Resistance***

Coercion

***Compliance***

Reward  
Legitimate

***Commitment***

Expert  
Referent

***Conversion***

Expert  
Referent