



## Christy's Rules for Big Conversations

Communication is difficult at the best of times. But when emotions are flaring and a problem must be solved, mistakes, sometimes big ones, can happen. So in my counseling office, we make up a list of rules for big conversations. Some people have heard of them as 'Fighting Fair' but that seems to say that a fight is necessary. Just because we don't start out in agreement doesn't mean we have to fight. We just need to dance together with a topic or a situation until a solution is found.

### Rule #1-Stay on Target!

Each big conversation should be focused on one topic or at least one topic at a time. If the conversation wanders, most of the time the opportunity to come together to solve the problem will be lost. Instead, the conversation can lead to blame or impasse.

### Rule #2-People are for being respected

Respect is a necessary part of every relationship. While it doesn't mean that one person has to control the other, it does ensure that the relationship is protected and honored. Wondering if your conversation is respectful? Watch for name calling, stepping over each other's words, and physical intimidation.

### Rule #3-Avoid Generalities

Human beings stereotype. It's how we learn to categorize,

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## HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday through Thursday, 8 am to 8 pm

Friday, 8 am to 5 pm

Saturday by appointment

## Acorn Counseling Education Services

*Working to strengthen families, children, and the community*

Christy Graham, President of ACES

### Communication

Relationships are not easy and much of the difficulty lies in communication. We think we are saying one thing, but because of the other person's gender, feelings, culture or health, they hear another. For most things, we can get by, but our important relationships are vital to our health and our happiness. This month, we are focusing on communication in families. We are offering a very low cost parent training, geared towards homeschooling families but open to anyone. At this training, parents will learn developmentally appropriate ways to communicate with their children. Our Gottman trained therapist, Laura Westbrook, will be offering hints through blogs and an appearance at our FaceBook Party. Our FB Party will focus on learning basic communication skills in the comfort of your own home.

**Need other kinds of helpful information? Call us for a free 15 minute consult on the phone. If we can't help you, we want to help you find someone who can.**



Our therapists will be on Facebook February 11<sup>th</sup> at 9 pm for our Facebook Party! Sign up today!

understand and predict behavior and events. It is a great benefit BUT generalizing in individual settings is a bad idea. That is where racism, sexism, and other isms come from and these can be very damaging to relationships. "Always" and "never" typically just ensure that there will be disagreement over the facts and a block to understanding the feelings behind the communication.

All in all, if you follow these rules it doesn't mean you will agree with each other, resolve all differences, or even like each other after the talk. But chances are, if you follow these rules, you are more likely to feel good about looking in the mirror. And that is really important. We need to be who we are, no matter what other people choose to do.

Christy Graham, LPC Supervisor is the clinical director at Acorn Counseling Education Services in Corinth. She works with all types of families, including families in crisis. Call for a 15 minute consult if you would like to understand more about counseling. 940-222-8703 ext 700.



## Upcoming Events and News

Acorn CES is growing and changing. Like the luckiest acorns, we are putting down roots in the community of Oakmont, Corinth, and Denton. We partner with Early Childhood Coalition, WATCH Denton, and other organizations to strengthen our community. We are working with the Texas Training Registry to be able to help train child care workers in Child Teacher Relationship Training. We are working with Capella University to bring Career Counseling opportunities to our agency. We are bringing bilingual counseling to south Denton. If you are interested in joining us, referring to us, or just finding out more about the exciting new things we are doing, call us! We can schedule a 15 minute phone consult to talk about just about anything. 940-222-8703.

Join us at WATCH Denton's meeting on February 19<sup>th</sup> from noon to 3 to find out more about how parents can partner with providers.

Next month, our focus is going to be PLAY! How can we make our most important relationships more fun? Play! Our monthly FB Party will focus on it and so will our newsletter.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Facebook Party

@ Acorn Counseling Education Services FB Page

FEBRUARY 10<sup>TH</sup> 9:00 PM TO 9:30 PM

Join us on Facebook for a party to talk about Communication. We are looking to teach about healthy communication skills to use during the month of Love. Simply click on the Events page of the site and comment and ask questions.

*\*Please remember this is for education purposes and is not a substitute for counseling. Also, Facebook is not private so be thoughtful in your questions and comments.*

### Child Parent Relationship Training for Homeschooling Families

@ 1430 Robinson Road #430 Corinth, Texas 76210

FEBRUARY 11<sup>TH</sup> 12:00 PM TO 1:30 PM

Child Parent Relationship Training is an amazing intervention that teaches parents to be the therapeutic partners for their child. It has been shown to be more effective than play therapy alone and allows you to connect and heal your child without them ever having to leave their home! We believe in this intervention so much that we are offering it at this special price just once a semester-10\$ per person, per class. Typical prices range from \$200 to \$500 per 10 week session.

This class will be taught by our Clinical Director, Christy Graham, Registered Play Therapist Supervisor. Beginning play therapists may also be taking this class with you. Call 940-222-8703 ext 700 to schedule an intake appointment prior to the class.

#### 7 Principles for Making Marriage Work

Laura Westbrook, LPC Intern will lead a group for couples based on the highly researched Gottman Method. Contact Laura for more information at 940-222-8703 ext 703.

Laura is accepting new clients. Call today to find out how she can help you and your family become stronger and closer! We are currently putting people on a waiting list for our two bilingual therapists that will be coming on board late spring and early summer.

In case of inclement weather, we will abide by DISD unless you are specifically *contacted* by your therapist. If in doubt, call the office at 940-222-8703.