Antelope Springs  
Blended Family Parenting Class  
Session 8

 Agenda

1. Review:
   a. Birth order basics in a blended family
   b. Job Chart set up
   c. Family meeting basics

2. Family Contract Basics
   a. Overview of structure
   b. Presentation
   c. Content issues
   d. Accountability
   e. Re-evaluation

3. Final Review

   “I have come to a frightening conclusion. I am the decisive element in the home. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a parent I possess tremendous power to make a child’s life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, and a child humanized or de-humanized.”

   Adapted from Dr. Hiam Ginott  
   “Between Teacher and Child”
Final Review

1. Blended families are different (we listed 9 reasons in class), list at least 3 major ways that they are different.
2. When we talk about blended families being “born of loss”, what does that mean?
3. List at least 3 different losses that blended families may have experienced.
4. What did you like about yourself in class?
5. One of the main myths that really can hurt a blended family is the belief that the family “should” work like a nuclear family. How is this so damaging?
6. When the grieving process is not attended to there are some predictable results. Discuss some of those results for both children and adults. What do we see as a result of repressed or denied grief?
7. When children in a blended family move between 2 homes what are some of the concerns that parents should attend to? Name at least 3.
8. Kids generally lose “3 Cs” in the divorce/death process. Name the 3 Cs.
9. Biological parents generally lose both status and stability through the divorce process; explain how that happens and what they may experience with those losses.
10. In class we discussed at length one of the major ways to empower the blended family. Discuss what that was and some of the ways to do it.
11. The definition of Parataxic Distortion is? When does it happen and why is it potentially very damaging?
12. In the first class we discussed 5 steps to letting go of the past . . . reorganize this list into the proper sequence.
   i. Express the feeling
   ii. Explain the feeling
   iii. Recognize the feeling
   iv. Accept the feeling
   v. Clarify the feeling

13. When blended families need help/support which of the following might NOT be as effective as the others?
   i. Church
   ii. Therapists
   iii. School
   iv. Family
   v. Legal counsel
   vi. Media
14. List some of the “red flags” about relationships with ex spouses.
15. When a former spouse won’t let go it is important that you ________ your __________.
16. Most 2nd, 3rd, etc marriages don’t do well. In fact, 75% end in divorce within the first 5 years.
   Why do you think that is? What are some ways to protect against that tendency?
17. Who is John Gottman and why might he be important to a blended family?
18. When we talk about the couple relationship in a blended family there are generally a number of
   areas for negotiation. Some of these can be very difficult to agree on. List at least 3 of these
   potentially tricky topics/areas.
19. The research suggests that disciplining the children in a blended family may be problematic.
   What are some of the difficulties that blended families encounter in discipline?
20. What do we mean by family of origin issues?
21. Why might understanding YOUR family of origin issues be so vital in empowering your
   relationships in the blended family?
22. Homeostasis is
   i. A realtor’s term used to describe a home that hasn’t sold for a long time.
   ii. Fear of same sex relationships.
   iii. The status quo.
   iv. A dynamic that protects a system from change.
   v. A great name for a fusion jazz group.
23. Evidence gathering is used for what purpose?
24. What are the 4 ways that we gather evidence?
25. Defensive behavior will usually fall into 3 major categories, name all 3 and describe each one.
26. We talked in class about 2 general emotional postures in interaction, and described how at any
   one time we can either ____________ or ________.
27. The research suggests that when we “talk trash” about our ex to the children there are some
   predictable results. Discuss the usual results and list the 2 major reasons WHY it happens.
28. There are a number of blended family stages. List all 5 of them and then take the time to describe
   in detail what happens in each stage AND what has to happen to push/pull the family to the next
   stage.
29. Why do blended families “get stuck” in certain stages?
30. How can you help children to gain trust again?
31. When birth order is disrupted what generally happens? How can you smooth that out in a blended
   family?
32. What causes stepchildren to compete with each other?
33. What techniques might you use to encourage children? List at least 5
34. Gottman teaches a technique called Emotion Coaching. List all 5 steps and what happens at each
   level. How might this technique be important to use in a blended family?
35. Stepchildren typically experience 3 major emotions as dilemmas. List all 3 and explain what the heck a dilemma is.

36. What is personalization? Explain the dynamic that drives it. Why is it essential to understand this in a blended family?

37. Primary loss generally impacts 3 possible areas. List all 3 areas and explain how losses are experienced in each area.

38. An MDE is? How might one address the need associated with an MDE?

39. The 3 basic emotional goals are?

40. Inner sentences are used to?

41. For blended families a weekly meeting can be very helpful. List 3 suggestions on how to set the meeting up.

42. Sexuality in a blended family may be a problem. List 3 reasons why and discuss some strategies to address the issue.

43. Research suggests that the non-biological parent will generally be most effective in assuming which of the following roles? Circle one only
   i. Confidant
   ii. Parent figure
   iii. Friend
   iv. Mentor
   v. Role model

44. Both parents should discipline the children, to show a united front. T F

45. What circumstances would suggest that the non-biological parent might discipline a teen? List both of them.

46. Explain how “anger is a mask for fear” and how that concept might be useful to understand in a blended family.

47. Name at least 3 unrealistic expectations that seem to be common to blended families.

48. Why does the research suggest that love is so important to success in a blended family?

49. What is the difference between praise and encouragement? How can that be useful in a blended family?

50. What is a “passion list” and how is yours working?