



Managing Difficult Parents with Compassion & Candour

Balancing empathy, care & kindness with honesty, transparency & candour.



THEMES

agreement, anxiety, assertiveness, attacking, authority, avoiding, being heard, catastrophisation, cognitive dissonance, etiquette, communication, competing needs, conflict, controlling, courage, deflection, disagreement, emotional reasoning, empathy, expectation setting, helping, helplessness, honesty, humility, labelling, learner outcomes, masking, partnership, perspective taking, professionalism, psychological safety, reframing, relationship building, retreating, shifting the burden, socialisation, stress, teacher self-efficacy, victimisation, well-being, withdrawing.

Parents & whānau of learners with specialist needs can be different propositions from those in mainstream.

Failing to jump from teacher of students to leader of parents, specialist teachers can often find themselves in unfamiliar and unwanted roles acting as unqualified counsellors, emergency responders, confidantes, nannies, social workers and coaches & mentors to emotionally needy parents & whānau.

Other times specialist teachers can be caught out, blind-sided and left on the back foot when strong destructive parental emotions usurp decency & civility.

In our work supporting specialist educators over the last 2-decades we know parents & whānau in your community can harbour & swing between a range of extreme emotions such as anguish, exhaustion, grief, fatigue, sadness, denial & defiance which can catch specialist educators out, and which if left unattended, can become an unhealthy basis of future relationships.

When specialist teachers lead parents & whānau they skilfully blend care, sensitivity & compassion with honesty, directness & candour. When stakes & emotions run high specialist teachers successfully making the jump from teacher of young people to leader of parents don't over-promise, catastrophise, emotionalise, seek to be liked, deflect, take criticism personally, conflate their role with self-worth, misread relational dynamics, feel bruised when parents push back, and don't feel guilty when leaning in to parents with uncomfortable truths.



If you're interested in supporting your teachers to use easily deployed tactics, approaches and strategies to successfully influence the most unreasonable of parents & whānau, and to reframe existing unhealthy relationships, this might be part of the solution you're looking for.

What are people saying about our programmes?

"Tony, the way you challenged our thinking and made us think about how to be effective has been a revelation ... the ideas you present are so different from mainstream PD providers and whilst I know some people are uncomfortable with that, the thinking and ideas you share make so much sense and so much of a difference. Why aren't there more people like you giving the same messages and making the complex so much easier to confront. Thanks once again – participants are saying it's the most compelling PD they've ever had with many a-ha moments!"

Dy Stokes, DP, Papanoa Street School, Executive Committee Christchurch Senior Leaders Network

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