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Case Study from M.I. Coaching

The following case study reflects a brief example of the analytical perspective employed with metaphorical iconicity in the coaching process. This example represents our academic and clinical effort to resolve business and personal issues in a manner which leads to life enhancing behavior and decisions.

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Metaphorical Iconicity reflects upon the fact that all children are entitled to their dignity, respect and a sense of privacy. As business owners, an implicit contract exists between the business owner and the staff: Services in exchange for money. When this relationship is acted out appropriately, it is the business owner who exercises power over the staff with a clear conscience. However, when you are brought up in a family in which the father was not an appropriate example of masculinity, this sense of being the powerful business owner with rights, as well as responsibilities and obligations, does not play out as it should.

The dysfunctional beliefs show up with business owners who hire employees often with a defective method or strategy. Their defective approach to hiring people to carry out their jobs leads to an almost predictable consequence. The business owner feels helpless to make things work because the staff is unmanageable. A business owner's capacity to build a staff that is effective and efficient is tied to the business owner's sense of identity and purpose. To put it more bluntly, who's the boss and why?

The point to consider is that just as children are entitled to dignity, respect and privacy, the owner of a business is entitled to certain experiences in return for the risk that he or she takes by opening up the business and offering a job to the employees. While it's impossible to completely predict the outcome of any hiring process, there are ways of protecting the business from unnecessary turnover. In short, the ability to protect your business comes from your ability to protect yourself.

The capacity to protect yourself, to protect your dignity, respect and privacy begins in childhood. In childhood, these inalienable rights are defended for you by your mother and father. When a mother and

father behave appropriately and defend these rights, rather than exploit them, the child slowly grows into the belief that they are supposed to defend their own best interests. This belief materializes in the way they run their companies. Should this belief not be present, then the inability to defend oneself tends to play out by hiring people who are not well-suited for the job description and who tend to constantly disobey. This is all part of a self fulfilling prophecy that began in childhood.

By choosing people who are not well-suited, the business owner gets to re-create that sense of helplessness that they experienced at the hands of their parents who exploited their rights rather than defend them. Businesses coaching clients are often referred because their businesses are not functioning well. This lack of efficiency can be attributed not only to the staff and their disregard for the basic principles of good business, but also to the business owner who does not enforce or perhaps is unaware and remains ignorant of the fundamental basics of running a business for emotional reasons.

Metaphorical iconicity would propose that such a person who is running a business, but who is unprepared to defend their own sense of dignity, respect and privacy, re-creates the same childhood experience in their professional experience with their business. The need to correct this problem only becomes evident when the business experiences financial insecurity.

A business owner's capacity to run a business effectively and efficiently is predicated on the owner's ability to look in the mirror and recognize his or her strengths and weaknesses, while taking on the responsibility to defend their best interests, which is then reflected in the efficient functioning of the business. This is accomplished by holding everyone accountable to their job description and, most of all, the business owner holding themselves accountable by taking action rather than continuing to live through the helplessness which was the point of reference from childhood.