

A Friendly Metaphor, Or Is It?

by Anne Kuntz, ISCA Past-President

We've all said it—the friendly metaphor for I'm here when or if you need me—"My door is always open." But what message have we REALLY been sending? Let's process this for a moment...

A door which is open leads to a space. And in our friendly metaphor it is the space you are probably occupying right now: your counseling office. "Always open" implies that the students/parent/colleague is welcome to come in at any time. This is very nice. It portrays a sense of receptive warmth and compassion for the other's neediness. That is a good message for a counselor to extend. Isn't it?

Now might be an appropriate time to get into the issues of codependent behaviors common in helping professionals; or the "how to help our client without doing the work for them" speech. But, that is not my object here. Instead I would like to draw further attention to the message that our friendly metaphor is sending. Or rather, the secondary message that is sent.

Every time we propagate the image of an open door we are sending a second message. Visualize this. What is the counselor, who is waiting

inside, doing while no one is there? Just waiting, reading the paper and drinking coffee perhaps? Scheduling? The message we are unconsciously sending is this—sure, we are here when you need us but until then we will just wait.

Try and follow me here. If I'm a counselor, with an "open door policy" as my distinguishing paradigm, then I am responsible to be there at the open door at all times. Otherwise the open door is useless. That means I am a person lying in wait for the next problem that needs to be fixed, the next crisis that needs to be managed, the next big thing that brings a student/parent/colleague in to seek out my guidance. That is NOT why I wanted to go into school counseling. If I had, I would've gone into a different helping profession.

I went into this profession to be proactive. I believe that I know a better way to reach kids than just waiting for them to identify themselves as having a problem. I believe in all that theory and data which we were required to study (you remember Piaget, Ericson, Kohlberg, etc). And I believe that if we approach a developmental understanding of our students in combination with practical, tested and valid applications then we will be

able to address the common student/teacher problem before it gets so bad they have to seek help from those sitting behind open doors. But this requires me to actively engage students where they are...which is NOT in an office. It requires a "guidance curriculum" (as ASCA puts it) complete with standards and goals that reinfused into the school's overall culture.

The message we send when we live by the "open door policy" is that we are merely reactive. I don't know about you but I am tired of responding to the same problem time and again. Why don't we drop the friendly metaphor and break out of our offices? School counselors of today, I invite you to spend time in the classroom and the lunchroom and at the after school events. Why not host some events yourselves? Target your audience; head the problems off at their source. But whatever you do, don't sit at an open door reading the paper, drinking coffee, and waiting for the next crisis or the next schedule change. Or, if you must do that, would you please close your door just a tad and get your job title changed because you are making the title of Professional School Counselor look bad.

Aspen Elementary School is Declared a Glasser Quality School!

By Pat Robey, M.A., L.P.C., William Glasser Institute Senior Faculty

On September 30, 2005, Aspen Elementary School in Vernon Hills, IL, was declared a Glasser Quality School (GQS). Although many schools in Illinois and the Midwest region (as well as around the world) have been using Glasser's principles to make systemic changes in their schools, Aspen Elementary is the first Illinois school that was actually founded on these principles and to declare itself as GQS.

Aspen is a multicultural school, includ-

ing White, Hispanic, Arab, Asian, and African-American students, with incomes varying from challenged to wealthy. Aspen's teachers and staff are a hard-working and dedicated group. All faculty and staff have had at least a minimal training to get to this goal. Most of the teachers have completed their William Glasser Institute (WGI) advanced practicum and are planning to become certified with the WGI.

Dr. Glasser joined Aspen's faculty, students, parents and friends in celebrating the declaration. After a day of special activities, Dr. Glasser signed the official Quality School Declaration. Dr. Glasser said he knew as soon as he entered the school that it was a quality school, because he could feel the "joy" in the building. It was a joyful day!

(continued on page 5)

A Welcome to Dr. Adam Zagelbaum! By Hugh C. Crethar, ISCA Post-Secondary Vice President Governors State University



Dr. Adam Zagelbaum is a new Assistant Professor of School Counseling at Governors State University.

He received my B.S. in Psychology from the University of Florida, an M.S. in Counseling from the CACREP-accredited University of Southern Mississippi, and my Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from Ball State University in Muncie, IN. His interest in school counseling developed primarily from the work of his father: a remedial education high school teacher from Bronx, NY. As a child, he went to work with his father and would notice how everyone in his

class was treated with the same level of respect and encouragement to succeed academically and interpersonally. He reports that this part of his identity has guided and inspired his work as a counselor and Counselor Educator.

He was a licensed school counselor in Indiana, Washington, and soon in Illinois as well as an NCC. He was one of only two doctoral students to receive status as an Assistant Professor while attending Ball State's APA-accredited Counseling Psychology program, because of my scholarship and assistantship work. He collaborated with Indianapolis Public Schools and Muncie Public Schools while working with the Peace Learning Center: a non-profit organization dedicated to the mission of providing quality conflict management, peace

and character education to all students within the state of Indiana. He most recently worked at Central Washington University, where he served as an Assistant Professor within both community and school counseling. His research interests include school counseling, school-based group counseling, conflict-management, mentoring, and working with underserved populations. He reports that he is excited to be back in the Midwest, and working with the faculty and students in Governors State University. He is also thrilled to be both the current Treasurer of ISCA and President-Elect of the Illinois Counselor Educators and Supervisor's (ICES).

We welcome Dr. Zagelbaum to Illinois and to ISCA.

Aspen Elementary School is Declared a Glasser Quality School- continued

By Pat Robey, M.A., L.P.C., William Glasser Institute Senior Faculty

(continued from page 4)

To become a GQS is not easy. It requires a systemic change of thinking from External Control to Choice Theory concepts. The school must meet the following characteristics:

1. Relationships are based upon trust and respect, and all discipline problems (not incidents) have been eliminated;
2. Total Learning competency is stressed and an evaluation that is below competence, or what is now a "B," has been eliminated. All "schooling" (rote learning of material divorced from relevance to students' lives) has been replaced by useful education;
3. All students do some quality work each year that is significantly beyond competence. All such work receives an "A" or "A+" grade.
4. Students and staff are taught to use Choice Theory in their lives and in their work in school. Parents are encour-

aged to participate in study groups to become familiar with the ideas of Dr. William Glasser.

5. Students do better on state proficiency tests and college entrance examinations. The importance of these tests is emphasized in the school.
6. Staff, students, parents and administrators view the school as a joyful place.

Dr. Glasser developed Reality Therapy in 1965 and his early focus was primarily on mental health. When he worked with Ventura School for Girls (actually a live-in campus for girls who were in trouble with the law), he began to consider the impact that school experience has on children, and added a school focus to his work. Success in school impacts success in life and in relationships! He has written numerous books on systemic change, and schools around the world have effectively applied the practice of Reality therapy to problem solving, and the

concepts of Choice Theory to personal and systemic change. Dr. Glasser was one of the five recipients of the "Living Legend" award at the ACA conference in Kansas City.

The ideas of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy are particularly relevant to school counselors because the school counselor's role involves work within the system as well as in individual work with students. Students who learn Choice Theory understand how they and others are motivated and learn to use this knowledge to create better relationships and to improve performance in school and in the community. Reality Therapy is an effective counseling tool, which also provides individuals with problem-solving skills that can be used throughout a lifetime.

For more information on Choice Theory and Reality Therapy, visit the William Glasser Institute website: wglasser.com, or contact Pat Robey at parobey@aol.com

President-Elect's Message

Roseanne Oppmann MS, NCC, LCPC

Happy New Year! This time of year is always very interesting. It can be a very exciting time for some people, a time of new hope for others, and a time for change for many. As school counselors we have many opportunities to help our students to set goals and to guide them in a positive direction. We also use our many talents to provide support to their parents and teachers. We are very fortunate to have special training and skills that are beneficial in helping to help enhance the lives of others. We also need to be mindful that we need to keep ourselves refreshed, rejuvenated, and reenergized in order for us to be the best we can be in our profession. As you begin 2006, I would like to encourage you to think about "The 10 Gifts of Counseling" listed below.

1. Caring

Care more about your personal health physically and mentally. A school counselor's job can be very stressful at times. Take time to renew and reenergize yourself by sparking your inner light and teaching your students to do the same. When we spark our inner light we glow with health from the inside out and feel good about who we are as human beings. This will also have an impact on how we perform our jobs each day. We will radiate a feeling of happiness and satisfaction about the profession we have chosen to be in. Finally, don't forget to stimulate your mind every day by thinking positive thoughts. Start your day with one positive thought about what you enjoy about being a school counselor. The mood will be set for the day and everyone around

you will notice that you truly love your job.

2. Outreach

Try to extend yourself a little further by seeking out a student, parent, staff member, administrator, board member, or someone you don't know very well. Try to acknowledge something positive about them or something they have done well recently and compliment them on it. Student- "I have noticed that you are always quiet in the hallway between classes" Parent- "I am calling to tell you that I really enjoy working with your child" Staff - "I have noticed that you really listen to your students when they are upset"

Administrator- "I appreciate how you include counselors in your meetings"

Board member- "I just called to tell you how much I enjoy being a counselor in this district"

A few positive words, and a few minutes of your time can go a long way to develop new relationships and establish a positive image about school counselors.

3. Understanding

Try to work on being more understanding towards people who tend to be difficult to work with. Make it a point to understand and accept where they are coming from, even when you believe they are not totally right. By understanding that you have no control over changing their thinking, you can take a little stress off yourself.

Just remember that they are only a small part of your life and we are all unique.

Focus on people who are positive in your life and just use your counseling skills to cope with the ones who make life a bit more interesting.

4. Never Give Up

Believe in yourself and that you can accomplish anything you set out to do. We teach this to other people all the time, but we also need to focus on ourselves. Think about something that you have wanted to accomplish but hesitated to do. Set a goal to accomplish that task sometime this year. Surround yourself with people who will support you and believe that you will succeed. Think of obstacles as interesting challenges and don't give up until you have succeeded.

5. Self improvement

Think about one thing you'd like to change or improve about yourself. Use positive self-talk to guide you. Think about this every day and celebrate any small step towards improvement. Tell yourself that you believe that you have the power to improve and accomplish this goal.

6. Educate

Learn all you can to keep yourself updated in our field. Read journals, books, and newsletters relating to school counseling so you are always on top of things. Teach others about our valuable role as school counselors every chance you get.

President's Message - continued

Amy Thompson - ISCA President

(continued from page 1)

At the January Leadership Meeting, ISCA Leaders will discuss the development of a *Legislative Agenda*. Though some preliminary work was done at our transition meeting in August, we will develop a final plan for our scheduled "Day on the Hill" currently planned for April. We are also in the beginning stages of collaboration with IACAC (the Illinois Association of College Admission Counselors) on some legislative issues in Springfield. Remember, there is *Power in Numbers!*

Also, look for the announcement in this

issue of the INSIGHT regarding Nominations and Elections. Yes, it's time again for you to consider taking on a leadership role in YOUR professional association.

Finally, I want to wish a warm welcome to our newest members of the ISCA Leadership Team:

- Adam Zagelbaum – Treasurer
- Pat Fuller – Champaign Region Area Representative
- Sherry Thomas – East St. Louis Region Area Representative

I am thankful for the willingness of

these individuals to contribute to ISCA and to help us better serve you, our members. We are still in need of Area Representatives for the following:

- Rockford Region
- Southern Illinois Region
- Macomb Region

Please contact me via e-mail (miramac@wideopenwest.com) if you are interested in representing school counselors in your area!

Here's to a great year – may you find profound professional fulfillment!

President Elect's Message - continued

Roseanne Oppmann - ISCA President Elect

(continued from page 2)

7. Leadership

Utilize your leadership skills in every way possible. Offer to be on school, district or community committees. Many decisions that are made affect our role in some way, however many times we are absent from committees because we did not volunteer and no one thought to ask us. You can also get more involved in our organization. Getting involved doesn't always mean more work. It simply means to come together to share ideas, use your talents, and have more input into how we can make our profession stronger.

8. Inspire

Inspire others by being a positive role model. If we send a message that we really enjoy being a school counselor, we can attract

potential candidates to join our field. We also can never take for granted that we must remain professional at all times. People do pay attention to what we do and how we behave in our field. They expect us to be experts at what we do and need to know that they can trust us if they need our support or help.

9. Negate Negativity

Be positive, positive, positive and don't let others hook you in to accepting their negative thoughts and attitudes. Distance yourself from negativity and focus only on the positive side of things. Help your students learn the power of being positive. Teach them that they are in control of their own thoughts and actions and that they have a choice to send positive or negative thoughts to their brain.

10. Go-getter

Go for being the best possible school counselor you can possibly be. We all know when we are doing our best work. Try to focus on being the best every day, even when we know it is hard at times. This will help us to feel good about what we are doing, and inspire us to carry on even through the most challenging situations. This year try to be a little more proactive and do just a little more to enhance the wonderful job you are already doing!

ICA Conference a Great Success

by Amy Thompson

The Annual ICA Conference, "Effective Professional Counseling: Practice and counseling Guided by Theory and Research," had many informative sessions and speakers and offered many opportunities for us to network as well as learn about services and products available from a variety of exhibitors. This year's Pre-conference sessions were directly tied to the conference theme with Dr. Robert Wubbolding, Dr. Michael Altekruze, and Dr. Alan P. Miliren providing interesting individual sessions and ICA's own Dr. Leslie O'Ryan and Dr. Melanie E. Rawlins presenting as a team. Sessions were well-attended and feedback was very positive. It is my hope that next year's pre-conference will be even more successful!

The conference itself offered an

Opening Keynote from Dr. Robert Wubbolding and reminded us to keep perspective in our work. The Saturday Keynote given by Dr. John Carlson was also fun and focused on the positives of life. All in all, the messages were both a respite from our daily work but provided energy to remind us what our work as counselors is all about.

ISCA also conducted our Annual Membership Meeting including introducing Leadership Team members and voting on bylaw changes. All of the bylaw changes proposed in the Fall INSIGHT were approved and the updated bylaws will be available on the ISCA website soon. The membership meeting was also a good opportunity to discuss what ISCA is

doing and to dialogue about upcoming events. Of course, immediately following our meeting was our annual Social/Reception where Past President, Anne Kuntz, was showered with a few gifts for her daughter-to-be, Ella. (Side note: For those who have not heard, I am pleased to report that Eleanor Louise Kuntz was born on November 29th at 11:57pm, and weighing in at 9 pounds, 1 ounce and measuring 20 inches. Mother, Father, and Baby are all doing well.)

Now we look forward to next year's conference (and the ISCA Spring Conference) which will undoubtedly continue the same quality sessions, networking, and learning opportunities that we have come to expect. I hope to see you in Springfield in October (and Elgin in April)!

ISCA Nomination Time - by Ann Kuntz

Each year we put out the call for motivated, passionate counselors who would like to volunteer their services and function on the leadership board of ISCA. I would like to briefly share my story with you so that you may see how easy it is to get involved.

When I first became involved in ISCA it was as the secretary. Here's how it happened. I was persuaded to attend a leadership meeting by my professor. I, of course, agreed to attend so that I could get some exposure in my soon-to-be career area and so that I could impress my professor. When I arrived, the president, whom I had just met that day, said to me, "Welcome Anne, and thanks for agreeing to be our secretary!" This was my first ISCA meeting and the first I had heard of my nomination! My professor had volunteered me before I could say no. But, being surprised into the position of secretary was the best thing that could've happened because attending meetings was a joy both professionally and personally. I enjoyed helping get things organized, put programs on track and make things happen. It was very fulfilling to the type-A part of my psyche. I also enjoyed being

a part of the changes in our profession and hearing about the progressive things being done in Illinois and elsewhere. But most of all, I enjoyed and continue to enjoy all the friendships I have made around the state and the country. I've met so many impressive people that have inspired me and taught me much about our job. It has been an honor to work with these people and a gift. You can get involved just as easily.

Are You Interested in a Position?

If you are interested in working with ISCA please consider running for a position. This year we will be electing a President Elect (to serve as President in 08/09) and two Vice Presidents, a V.P. of Elementary Counseling and V.P. of Secondary Counseling, who serve two-year terms which begin this July.

The positions of President or Vice President only require that you are a current member of ISCA and currently working as a counselor in the role that you represent (i.e. the Elem. V.P. must work at an elementary school). The

duties include attendance at the quarterly leadership meetings and an occasional article written for the *Insight*. How else you become involved, above and beyond that, is up to you.

Besides the above-mentioned positions, we are always eager for more people to become involved. If you think you would like to find out more about ISCA leadership before jumping in, please attend a leadership meeting or contact one of the leadership board members.

Here is How You Get Nominated

Those wishing to nominate themselves or a colleague should email me, Anne Kuntz, with your name (or your nominee's name), work address, phone number. You must also compose a statement of less than 100 words for why you are interested in the job and what you would like to accomplish for our profession. This statement will be printed in the next elections edition of the *Insight* newsletter. Please email me at akuntz@highstream.net by April 7th, 2006.

Executive Director Outlook

- Dan Stasi



Left to Right - Anne Kuntz - ISCA Past President, Amy Thompson - ISCA President, Richard Wong - ASCA Executive Director, and ISCA Executive Director Daniel Stasi

I am continuing to “upgrade” our connection with current members. With the help of members of the leadership team we have developed a series of letters thanking existing members for renewing their membership and encouraging non members to join. It is important that all of you help us out by encouraging other school counselors to get involved. Print out a membership application from our web site and pass it along.

The legislative session has started up in Springfield. With a shortened schedule in Springfield the pace will be quick. I will be watching for legislation that may affect school counselors. If you are concerned about any legislation please let me know so I can make legislators aware of our concerns.

News You Can Use: Opt Out and the Military

by Amy Thompson, ISCA President

We all know that enlisting in one of the branches of the military can be a great option for students upon graduation. We also know that the military is not for everyone. School counselors may be placed in a difficult situation depending on our own personal beliefs about the military. Nonetheless, since part of our job is to help students with their post-high school planning, an important discussion needs to take place with all students who are considering enlistment. I try to address all of the following with my students:

Pros

- College tuition benefits
- Improved personal discipline
- Training in a specific job
- Teamwork skills
- See the world
- Learn about combat maneuvers
- Improve physical fitness

Cons

- Long/Big commitment
- Must follow orders – no matter what
- May have limits on jobs – ASVAB
- Work with others you may not like
- Be put in dangerous situations
- Active combat in difficult places
- Can be mentally & physically exhausting

Of course this is not a comprehensive list but it starts an important conversation.

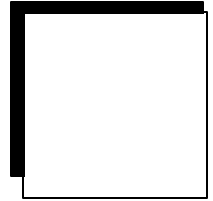
Another issue that often puts school counselors in a bind is when Military Recruiters assigned to your school request personal information about your students. Per the “No Child Left Behind” Act there is language which requires schools to provide the Name, Address, Telephone Number and Grade in School for students enrolled in grades 10-12. An important facet of this legislation is that there is an “Opt Out” provision. Your school can ask the parent(s) or student to sign a form asking to be either *included* or *excluded* from the list provided to the military. If the family “Opts Out” (asks to be excluded), you do NOT need to provide their personal information.

It is also important to note that Military Recruiters are not allowed to collect any additional information about these students or to request information about students at any other grade level (anytime before grade 10). Therefore, if you are unlucky enough to have a pushy recruiter at your school or in your area, you have a right to stand up and tell them that they cannot have the information of students below grade 10. If you are concerned about complying with this legislation but also want to protect your student’s privacy and have not already established an “Opt Out” form, you may want to talk to you district administration who will likely contact the school’s lawyer.



**Illinois School
Counselor Association**

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Time Sensitive Materials

Calendar of Events

January 21, 2006	ISCA Leadership Meeting - York High School Elmhurst
April 2006	Day on the Hill - Springfield (date to be determined)
April 7, 2006	ICA Retreat - Rend Lake
April 21, 2006	ISCA Spring Conference Elgin Community College
June 24-27, 2006	ASCA Conference - Chicago



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Inside

President Elect Message	2
Executive Director Outlook	3
Opt Out Military	3
Open Door	4
Quality School	4
New Educator Welcome	5
ICA Conference	6
Nominations	6
Calendar of Events	8

Imagine the Possibilities!

Amy Thompson - ISCA President



Amy Thompson

Welcome to 2006! Honestly, when I think about what year we live in, I have a hard time truly conceiving of it. I distinctly remember being in 5th grade when my teacher asked us to imagine our lives in the year 2000...I was going to be turning 33 – that did NOT seem

possible! And yet, here I am, six years later than that once-hard-to-imagine era and trying to imagine the next 30+ years. In some ways our society and world have progressed in ways beyond that which my 11 year-old mind could have anticipated. At the same time, we still have so much left to accomplish. We certainly are not living the “*Jetson’s*” life I was certain was my future. (I wouldn’t mind pushing a button and having a complete, delicious meal roll out on the conveyor belt!) However, I am hopeful about all that we can accomplish. School Counselors, in my mind, are the “doers” of schools. We make things happen by staying focused on solutions. So, as we enter this New Year, I want to encourage you all to imagine the *possibilities*. Imagine what you could do in your school to make your student’s lives richer. Think big but start small. Remember that most things take time and patience to really become part of “the system” but you CAN make the difference in your school. In the meantime, ISCA will continue to work hard doing important work to lead, support, and assist you.

The ISCA Model Task Force has been hard at work and will continue to do so until a recom-

mendation is made to incorporate key concepts of the Illinois Developmental Model, The ASCA National Model, Social-Emotional Learning Standards, Illinois Best Practices, and Illinois School Counselor Standards. What this group develops may well be the cathartic moment our profession needs in Illinois.

Your ISCA Leadership Team is in the final

“School Counselors, in my mind, are the “doers” of schools. We make things happen...”

planning stages for our annual Spring Conference to be held Friday, April 21st at Elgin Community College. A listserv announcement and mailing will be sent out before the end of the month with more details about cost, schedule, and call for speakers. Take this opportunity to rejuvenate and leave with fresh ideas.

The ICA Fall Conference provided another excellent opportunity to expand our learning and understanding. There were many excellent speakers, sessions, and exhibitors. If you were not able to attend this fall, mark your calendars now for next year’s conference “Counseling, One Profession, One Identity” to be held October 26-28, 2006 at the Springfield Hilton Hotel.

(continued on page 7)

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