

The FUTURE Series - X

Family Unification Techniques: Unique Relationship Enhancement

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IN-PATIENT TREATMENT ADVANTAGES

1. In-patient treatment brings forth certain forces that cannot be created in out-patient settings. When a child is placed in an in-patient setting, it will evoke in that child a sense of powerlessness. Whoever ordered this setting will be held responsible (to blame) by the child. If the responsible person is the court or “the doctors,” this will work in a positive direction. The in-patient facility now, at least temporarily, will be seen as the “enemy,” and not the TP. When the child feels alone and powerless, he or she will seek to bond with whoever else is present from the child’s past life, here, the TP. The child will feel angry at the in-patient facilitator and the court and/or the doctors. Bonding with the TP will be fostered. However, unless the child comes to accept the fact that he or she was deliberately misled, this bonding may last little longer than the time spent in the in-patient setting. This tendency to bond with the TP will encourage the child to cooperate—for the time being—with the “treatment” plan.

2. The child knows his or her freedom will be drastically limited unless he or she cooperates. The consequences of non-cooperation will be a longer (unwanted) stay in the in-patient setting.

3. “Cognitive dissonance” may set in. This may have a positive outcome for the TP if the child explains to him- or herself that he or she is incarcerated “because I believed (the TP) was bad, and I was wrong.” *Unless this step is achieved, in-patient treatment is rarely successful over longer time periods.*

4. In-patient settings allow longer time periods to show the child the TP can be flexible and learn new parenting techniques (offered by the in-patient staff), and that he or she is not “evil.”

5. In-patient settings work most effectively when they present the child (and the parents) with highly structured and well thought-out treatment plans, specifically designed to foster reunification. Free-form “traditional therapy” is rarely successful, unless the child comes to believe he or she was deliberately misled into believing the TP was “bad.”