**Real Client Facilitation Debrief**

**Who**: I was the facilitator. The client was my fourteen year old cousin Steven. The resource group was made up of nine children, ages seven to fourteen.

**What**: Steven’s challenge started out as: “It would be great if I can gain more upper body strength and muscle.”

**Where**: A relative’s house. She has ample wall space, an easel, and seating.

**When**: Sunday October 31, 2010. 12:00 PM. Preliminary meeting between the facilitator and client took place on Wednesday October 27, 2010.

**Why**: This facilitation took place because of my class requirement. Steven was the client because he expressed great interest in becoming more involved in the process so that he could learn more about CPS. This interest sprouted because he sister was the client for a similar project for another class of mine. The challenge for me was finding and teaching nine school-age children the CPS process. I believe this challenge came through with great success.

**Session Itinerary**

* Everyone arrived between 12:00 and 12:30. While the resource group was arriving I made sure to greet everyone as I was also getting set-up for the session. While setting up, some were sitting around asking questions about CPS while others were talking amongst themselves.
* We got started around 12:30. Anyone that did not know people from the resource group introduced themselves and nametags were provided. I started off by telling everyone about the Creative Studies program and why I decided to do the program. I went over CPS roles and guidelines. I talked about how the process is good for dealing with a lot of the issues school-age children face.
* I wanted to do a silly warm-up that involved generating problem statements since that was the part of the process in which we were to start. I gave them an abbreviated version of Dr. Firestein’s story about Lady Bigfoot and had the resource group warm up by generating problem statements for LBF challenge, “It would be great if I can find true love” using Brainstorming with Post-its. The kids had a great time with this warm-up and got pretty silly. It was at this point in which I realized that a couple of the resource group members were getting off-task. This is when I should have gone over some rules for CPS. The good part was that the warm-up did get the group going and motivated.
* Next, I introduced Steven’s challenge, “It would be great if I can gain more upper body strength and muscle.” Steven went over his background data and I also shared some of the information that he shared with me during the client interview. I asked the group if there were any questions of which there were none.
* For the next 5 minutes, I had the group generate problem statements using Brainstorming with Post-its. After the group slowed down, I started to show some visual connection pictures. This seemed to invite new thinking since the first picture I showed them was of an apple. Many ideas about eating healthy came to the surface. I showed them another picture that looks like a maze which earned many exercise ideas for Steven. After the group appeared tired, I gave them a break while I had Steven highlight his favorite problem statements.
* In the end there were five clusters for which I had him select one that he really felt would be benefited by getting more ideas. He chose the cluster, “H2 eat healthy?” I brought the resource group back from their break and we generated ideas for how Steven can eat healthier in order to gain muscle.
* The resource group was ready for this challenge. In about eight minutes, they generated over 70 ideas for Steven. The two younger kids really got into this one which was great to see. A concern during this time was that one of the resource group members once again started giving off-task ideas. I should have dealt with this situation a little bit more. I may have been able to get the resource group to think deeper by concentrating more.
* I had Steven go through and mark the ideas that he liked the best. When he was done, I laid out all of the poster paper we had used with the ideas all over. While he was looking at everything we created a plan. He made two short-term goals, two medium-term goals, and one long-term goal. Lastly, I asked him what it felt like to be a client and he said that it was an “interesting perspective”. He also said that he felt like he got a lot of good ideas and motivation to follow through with his challenge. Several of the resource group members also asked me about having another CPS facilitation to work other problems. It was good to hear that they enjoyed the session. The seven year old that participated started generating problem statements for the Buffalo Bills loss when we got home which was funny and exciting to see since he enjoyed himself as well.

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**Pluses**

* Many kids were interested in coming to learn more about CPS.
* Several of the resource group members expressed interest in getting more involved and learning more about the process.
* The event elicited more excitement about creativity and CPS in my nephew Brandon (this is one of my course goals).
* Steven felt like going through the process was very helpful. He felt that he created a plan that he can stick to.
* Going through the process was fun for the kids because they were laughing and joking as they really searched for wild and crazy ideas.
* While facilitating, I felt very comfortable. I knew that starting with generating problem statements was a good place to start for Steven’s problem and that brought up a lot of different smaller challenges that Steven felt he had not thought about previously.
* I feel that I created a free and comfortable atmosphere. I took some time prior to the facilitation to get to know the resource group members I did not know. I went over the diverging rules with explicit examples. The kids felt comfortable talking about their ideas for eating healthy and being healthy.
* All three facilitation projects I have done for classes have been when different age groups. I was very interested to see how children respond to CPS different than adults. I believe that schools are indeed moving in the right directions allowing for more freedom and creativity in school projects (little by little).

**Potentials**

* It might help Steven gain muscle, get stronger, and help him get involved in Pole Vaulting and the Track team. Getting more involved is good for him as this is his freshman year of high school.
* It might motivate me to find more time to devout to teaching children CPS, specifically the children in my family and their friends to start.
* It might motivate Brandon to use creativity language more often.
* Knowing CPS techniques might help the high school kids think through social situations in a different way.
* It might help me figure out some CPS activities to do in my own future classroom.

**Concerns**

* H2 establish boundaries and rules for children in order to keep them from getting out of control during diverging tools?
* HMI motivate the client to attempt to generate more ideas?
* H2 better consider seating arrangements for children in order to minimize off-task behavior?

**Overcoming one Concern:** H2 establish boundaries and rules for children in order to keep them from getting out of control?

* Create a list of rules for children-centered CPS sessions and make a poster.
* Go over behavior rules before running a CPS session.
* Ask the kids themselves what behaviors should be expected of them before starting the session.
* If there are one or two kids displaying problem behaviors during the session, talk to them individually about it during break time.
* If problem behaviors are recognized early or expected, develop a seating arrangement.
* When describing the “seek wild and unusual ideas” divergent guideline, explain how there is a limit and that resource group members should be able to explain how their idea relates to the challenge at hand.
* Understand that children, especially younger ones, need more breaks than adults.
* When selecting toys and other visual stimulants make sure to ask oneself if the toys will keep the children on-task and explain rules for using the toys during the facilitation.
* Limit distractions.
* Have warm-up activity be about generating ideas for rules during CPS sessions.