

HAPPY HOLIDAYS?

Words: Tanya Curtis



THE HOLIDAY SEASON – FESTIVE FOR SOME, YET STRESSED, ANXIOUS, DEPRESSED AND/OR ANGRY FOR OTHERS.

Have you ever wondered why at the end of the festive season so many people are 'relieved' that 'it's all over for another year'?

Have you ever wondered why the festive season results in an increase in:

- mental health issues
- family arguments
- stress
- anxiousness
- temper tantrums
- and so many other unpleasant outcomes

when the mere title 'festive season' suggests it will be festive?

What is it about this time of year?

To me ... it simply all comes down to the pictures we create and the smashed pictures that follow!

It comes down to our willingness and choice to communicate our pictures to other people and to understand and accept other people's pictures.

Our pictures are simply the images we create of the way we think life 'should be'. Our pictures are our wants, our expectations, our 'shoulds' and even our needs. People are often attached to their pictures and become anxious, upset and sometimes angry when their pictures do not happen the way we think they were going to happen – these are what I call our 'smashed pictures'. Smashed pictures are what can result in increased anxiety, stress, sadness, anger or use of any unwanted behavior by any person ... child, teenager or adult!

Life can be filled with smashed pictures for many reasons. A key reason is that we rarely communicate our pictures effectively with other people yet we still expect everyone to meet our

pictures. No wonder people continue to smash our pictures!

During the relationship counselling that I offer, it is frequently identified that poor communication is the cause of most relationship challenges. Communication challenges occur when we don't discuss and share our pictures, yet expect our pictures to happen and be met by other people.

This brings us back to the festive season. So many people, so many pictures, so many expectations, so many wants and needs not shared yet expected - thus so many smashed pictures.

Smashed pictures of:

- Who we are spending time with
- How long we are spending time with, when and where
- What gifts to buy or what was expected to be received
- Who says what to who and why they should or should not be saying that
- Who does something they should or should not be doing

I could go on and on with examples of smashed pictures, however the reality is, it is common practice to impose our pictures onto other people and equally other people to impose their pictures onto us. Thus with so many people, so little communication, yet so many pictures there is guaranteed to be many smashed pictures.

It is quite simple to alter this experience. The simplicity is to:

- Share our pictures clearly with other people.
- Offer our pictures to others with an understanding that their picture may be different - not right or wrong, just different!
- Understand and accept other people's pictures and allow their pictures to be

- Know you always have a choice to change your own behaviour but you can never change another person by trying to make them meet your picture.

If a person is smashing your picture by speaking to you in a 'rude tone' you can't stop them speaking in that way. However you can choose to stay and listen or alternatively you can choose to leave that conversation by saying, "I choose not to stay with you when you speak to me that way".

Know that we all have choices but that we can only change our own behaviour. As soon as we try to change another person's behaviour we are imposing our pictures onto them.

And simply know that:

- Same and liked pictures = minimal anxiety *whereas*
- Different and disliked pictures = increased anxiety and increased use of unwanted behavior

With unimposing communication, the festive season can in fact be an enjoyable time for all and continued into all parts of the year!

The key is to ...
COMMUNICATE PICTURES CLEARLY
 Share your pictures
 Listen and understand other
 people's pictures
 and
 Provide all with an opportunity to have
 the same picture.



Multi Disciplinary Behaviour Specialist Centre

FABIC WELCOMES SPEECH PATHOLOGIST

Speech pathologist, Kathryn Maroney has now joined the Fabic Team. Kathryn joins us after moving from Melbourne where she has been working with children and adolescents with a particular focus on Autism. Kathryn's speech pathology services support with assessment and treatment of:

- language delays and disorders
- pragmatic language and social skills
- problem solving skills (higher level language)
- Identifying emotions in self and others
- play
- speech clarity
- stuttering
- literacy
- participation in the classroom
- alternative communication systems



Kathryn also offers communication assessments for autism diagnosis and assessments and reports.



FABIC Director: Tanya Curtis leads a team of qualified behaviour specialist, psychologists, speech pathologist, occupational therapists and counsellors who all employ the unique Fabic methodology based on supporting people to understand & change unwanted behaviour. Applicable Fabic services are approved by Medicare, Helping Children with Autism package, Better Start for Children with Disabilities & Private Health.

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