

Residential Counselor Orientation Series – Episode 5 - Labeling

This episode reviews The Domain Compass, which is a way to visualize four domains of psychological functioning.



In the East, there's the domain of emotions, consisting of feelings and moods.

In the South, there's the domain of cognitions, consisting of thoughts and beliefs.

In the West, there's the domain of behaviors. That's includes both external behaviors and all the internal workings of your physical body and nervous system.

In the North, there's the domain of executive skills. That's where self-control is found.

Another helpful way to visualize personal psychology is captured by The Aspect Compass.



The Artist expresses emotions to communicate to others and experiences the world, largely in terms of emotions.

The Scout is in charge of exploring the world, trying to make sense of it, and reporting its findings to the rest of your brain.

The Warrior includes the parts of your brain that control your muscles and entire physical body.

The Chief gets feedback from the other aspects of your personal psychology and provides regulation through executive skills.

Labeling is a key technique for giving each kid's inner Chief the feedback it needs to do its job of self-regulation of emotions, cognitions, and behaviors. It begins with increasing each kid's awareness of their own behaviors.

Labeling is simply stating, with no attached judgment or direction, what a kid is doing, that specific moment. Attentive adults instinctively do this with very young kids; however, even older youth in residential treatment tend to have developmentally delayed executive skills.

Labeling develops kid's inner Chief through repetition. Eventually, the clients will replace your voice with an internal voice (their inner Chief's) that helps them monitor their own behaviors. As that ability strengthens, their inner Chief will also become more skilled at monitoring, at maintaining awareness of, their own emotions and thoughts as well.