
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everybody:

I was in Shreveport last weekend to help my folks out after my mom had a fall. My parents are at the age when a fall is not a good thing. Usually when there is a fall, there is also a broken bone, and in this case, my mom broke the upper portion of her left arm. Everything at the Livers house was already at a slow pace, and everything has slowed way down. So, I was there last weekend and again this weekend, to tend to mom and the broken bone. . I am fortunate enough to be able to help them out as needed.

Well, the rest of the week, I was involved with the leadership team retreat. I think calling something like this a “retreat” is a little misleading. Some people might conjure up the idea that we were sitting in lawn chairs, under shade trees, sipping drinks with little umbrellas in them. This was a retreat in that the leadership team took time away from their offices, in a somewhat secluded area, and that in and of itself is nice. But, it was real work, with an agenda packed with important, relevant and useful content.

The retreat allowed us, as a leadership team, to look at our strengths and grow as a team. It also allowed us to look at ourselves introspectively, so that, as individuals, we can grow and become better team members. We had to read and absorb a textbook prior to arrival – *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*. Among the topics we studied were Trust: the Foundation for Effective Teams; Confronting Conflict; Commitment: Achieving Buy-in and Clarity; Motivation Through Accountability and Measuring Your Team’s Effectiveness. Heavy stuff. But it’s all about the importance of teamwork.

It’s now more important than ever to work as a team, with all the challenges ahead of us. We, as an organization, are effective as a team – each one of us in every location in our agency is a member of the team. To the extent that all OJJ teams work and function well, we are better able to meet the mission as we move forward. Our ability to work as a team is demanded at ever higher levels. I did not get to talk to everyone who attended the retreat,,but the ones I got to talk with said it was really worthwhile.

The agency’s Leadership Manual was distributed to all who participated in the retreat. Feel free to ask your director, regional manager or unit leader to share it with you. We plan to put the manual on our website as well, to help nurture OJJ’s up and coming leaders.

Well, the weather has finally given us a little reprieve from the oppressive heat. I’m so happy for the cooler temperature. Wherever you are in the great state of Louisiana, I hope you enjoy a great fall weekend. Just as long as you don’t fall and break anything, that would not be pretty. So, to each and every member of the OJJ team, at every office and facility, my thanks for all you do every day and every where, to meet the mission. We could not do it without every member of the team.

Sincerely, “Doc” *Dr. Mary Livers*

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