



## NAVIGATING FORMAL SERVICES

As much as I can appreciate an optimistic perspective, sometimes it isn't enough to problem-solve around life's circumstances. As Murphy's Law can often pose twists and turns within our navigation system, it can be very challenging and traumatic as we experience these changes, whatever they may be.

Life can provide opportunity for constant adjustment as we grow and develop individually and together with our families.

The tricky part is...**HOW** do we adjust? **WHAT** can we do to help ourselves and problem-solve? Even when we feel our back is against the wall.

If we tend to struggle with a health, behavioral or social issue, it's very common to seek out advice from a professional in the field. However, this is definitely not a: One Size Fits All, rule of thumb.

Let's be honest, it's extremely difficult to accept that there may be a 'problem' or 'something wrong'. Allow me to reframe: This simply means there is an opportunity to thrive. The first step is the most challenging to take and it includes **talking to someone**. Yes, I encourage you to explain your situation to a friend, trusting co-worker, family member or other informal support of choice. It's very healthy to gain multiple perspectives and insight from trusting supports. You may find a solution in the process.

If resolution is not found, I encourage you to seek out a formal support that would include: your PCP, your child's pediatrician, your child's school or your therapist. Professionals working in the field can offer a perspective that includes a detailed plan of care. Trust me, these members of our community have experience and can offer insight that can shed light and provide comfort along with much needed reassurance.

But please remember, **YOU** are your number one advocate for yourself and your family. If you feel you need a different form of guidance, continue your search and be open to the process. Keep in mind you may receive referrals and may experience one-way streets, detours and dead end roads. Never quit or give up. Your answers are out there, you just need to find them.

If there was a 'magic pill' available for these situations it would be: a **flexible attitude** and **radical acceptance** towards the issue. Instead of making excuses, fighting against the issue, or simply ignoring it altogether, it's important to gravitate towards the area in need and working on accepting this change, this barrier or challenge. Yes, this is difficult. Yes, this is uncomfortable. Yes, this requires change. But remember, chaos is a necessary part of change. The process and struggle is an expected piece to resolution.

So, I wish you good luck on your journey.  
Remember, our doors are always open as Caring Hands  
and AIBDT are prepared to assist you on your way.

*Warmly,*

*Miss Gretchen MS, NCC, LPC*