

THE FALLACY OF THE TEAMS MODEL
(previously the Containment Model)

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(Discussion of the TEAMS Model on Page 52, Section 2 of the Report)

A recent probation case in Arapahoe County Court exposed the collusion that can and does happen in the Sex Offender Management Board's (SOMB) attempt to maintain the Containment Model under a "softer" name, the TEAMS Model. While the attempt to improve on the coldness of the old Containment Model is appreciated, this case shows that Probation's position under the Colorado Courts (not under the purview of the SOMB), makes it easy for the D.A.'s, Prosecutors and Probation Officers to work together to overpower treatment programs (under the purview of the SOMB) chosen for the probationer by the Probation Officer in order to defeat a positive probation experience!

Due to the tenacity of the defense attorney and the client in this case, when a small number of case-related papers arrived from the D.A.'s/Prosecutor's Office for an early hearing, it was obvious that this was only part of the case relevant paperwork. Interestingly, there was, at the bottom of at least some of the papers released to the Defense, a note saying "attachment". The attachment materials were not included in this early release. The Judge called for another hearing, and for the Peoples' Representatives to get the "attachment" paperwork and any other related paperwork to the Defendant and his attorney. The paperwork received grew in number of pages from the low hundreds to over 1,000 pages!

Contained in these now exposed documents was language making it clear that the People and the Probation Officer were "out to get this man." Language such as "we're going to get this guy" appeared in some of the documents. According to the client/defendant, even after this paperwork appeared, there were still missing documents. The Judge had also made it clear that he was not happy that the Probation Officer had removed this man from treatment, which at the time of the hearing also constituted about a year of removal from SOISP, and confinement to home except for work and one or two other activities. Because of two technical violations – information freely admitted by the defendant to his therapist and not thought by the therapist to be of serious consequence – the probation officer made the decision to revoke his SOISP Probation! The therapist found that when he related them to his "team member", the probation officer, the officer was furious and insisted that treatment write a termination letter from treatment for this man. The therapist totally reversed his position regarding whether these two things were serious seemingly based on the probation officer's fury.

Trying to create a meaningful "TEAM" when only therapists, evaluators and polygraph examiners are under the purview of the SOMB (i.e. probation under the courts, and parole under the Department of Corrections) is a great challenge. The goals of judicial and the goals of sex offense treatment do not go hand in hand. The Judge was so furious when he realized the collusion that had taken place as evidenced by these documents, that he reinstated the SOISP and sex offense treatment, and reminded the D.A.'s Office and the Probation Officer present (not the officer in charge of the case) that "you work for me." While this is only one case, many do not make it through SOISP for the same or similar reasons.

As a final note, treatment programs are very nervous that if they do not comply with probation's wishes, they will not send clients to them in the future. This punishment of programs for not agreeing with the probation officer really happens. While Parole appears to be doing better despite its lack of purview under the SOMB, the model obviously needs serious and ongoing tweaking!

REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE

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HELD AT CHICAGO, ILL., FROM SEPTEMBER 15 TO 19, 1917

AND

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