**Playbook to Inject the Healthy Undercurrent of Normality and Accountability**

*Mental or Physical Impairment Seed*

A Message from the Movie “The Miracle Worker” –released 2000



**Who:** Rachel, Dad, Mom, Grandma

**What:**

* Watch selected clips from the Walt Disney movie “The Miracle Worker”
* Together, find the answers to the following questions:
	+ Scene 1: Breakfast Tantrum Behavior
		- What was the parent’s parenting philosophy in dealing with Helen?
		- How did the worker challenge this philosophy?
		- What did the worker demand of Helen that her parents did not?
		- How did Helen respond to the worker’s higher expectations of her?
		- Do you think it was easy for the worker to be consistent and demand more from Helen than what had always been expected from her?
	+ Scene 2: Dinner Tantrum Behavior
		- Why did Hellen revert back so quickly once she returned home, after having made so much progress with the worker?
		- How did the different caregivers respond to Helen’s misbehavior?
		- What do you think would have happened to Helen if the worker had not intervened?
		- If left unfixed, how do you think Helen’s misbehaviors would have affected the family?

**When:**

* Next Thursday during your family therapy session

**Where:**

* In the therapist’s office

**How:**

* Watch the selected scenes and discuss the questions above
* Discuss what action steps are now needed to maintain accountability – these action steps might become a second playbook or a hybrid contract

**Therapist’s Guide for this Playbook**

**Suggested Viewers:** The Parents who…

* Have children diagnosed with chronic mental or physical impairments or are viewed as impaired in some way by the family.
* Need an illustration of how crucial the balance of love and limits is to setting children up for success in life.
* Need to see that their low expectations for their children’s behavior and education can limit their child’s ability to change or improve.
* Are not seeing immediate results in their child’s behavior and they are tempted to give up and go back to the old ways.

**Script for Setting up the Scenes:**

The clips I am about to show you are from Disney’s Version of The Miracle Worker. It is about young Helen Keller who is unable to speak, hear or see and as a result her behaviors have become out of control and violent. Annie Sullivan is called into the home by Helen’s parents in hopes of reaching their daughter before it is too late.

**In the first scene you will see….**

The Worker is sitting down to her first meal with Helen and her family when she quickly realized that everyone in the family allows Helen to use her hands to eat off of their plates as she walks around the dinner table.

**Look for….**

* What is the parent’s parenting philosophy when dealing with Helen?
* How does the worker challenge this philosophy?

**Play Selected Scene 1: Breakfast Tantrum-behavior (pause the clip at 29:40 for discussion)**

* 26:44-29:40 (Worker challenges parent’s helpless view of their daughter in order to motivate them to expect more from their daughter)

**Discussion Questions from Scene 1:**

* What was the parent’s parenting philosophy in dealing with Helen?
* How did the worker challenge this philosophy?

**Play Selected Scene 1 continued: Breakfast Tantrum-consequence**

* 32:20-36:17 (Worker demonstrates tough love by being consistent and holding to her expectations of Helen)

**Discussion Questions from Scene 1:**

* What did the worker demand of Helen that her parents did not?
* How did Helen respond to the worker’s higher expectations of her?
* Do you think it was easy for the worker to be consistent and demand more from Helen than what had always been expected from her?

**Main Lessons from Scene 1:**

* Much can be accomplished when people refuse to give up.
* If you don’t dare to dream of accomplishing big things then you will not even try to attempt them.
* The balance of love and limits is crucial to the future success of a child.

**In Scene 2 you will see….**

Helen has re-entered back into her home with her parents and she quickly begins to test her parents and the worker, at the dinner table, to see if they are going to hold her accountable in her old surroundings.

**Look for….**

* What Helen does to test the new rules once she is back into her old surroundings?
* How Helen quickly plays all the caregivers against each other to get back the power and control of the home.
* How did the parents initially respond to Helen’s attempt to get back control?
* How did they change their response once the worker challenged them? Why do you think they changed their response?

**Play Selected Scene 2: Dinner Tantrum- behavior (Pause at 1:19:27 for discussion)**

* 1:15:42-1:19:27 (Helen tests the parents and the worker to see if they are going to be consistent or go back to their old ways-consistency)

**Discussion Questions for Scene 2:**

* Why did Helen revert back so quickly once she returned home, after having made so much progress with the worker?
* How did the different caregivers respond to Helen’s misbehavior?

**Play Selected Scene 2 continued: Dinner Tantrum- behavior**

* 1:21:07-1:23:24 (The hard work and consistency produces desired outcome- Helen has a breakthrough in the middle of a logical consequence)

**Discussion Questions for Scene 2:**

* What do you think would have happened to Helen if the worker had not intervened?
* If left unfixed how do you think Helen’s misbehaviors would have affected the family?

**Main Lessons from Scene 2:**

* Long Term consistency is required for true and lasting change.
* Setting limits and attainable goals for your child is showing them love.
* The balance of love and limits is crucial to the future success of a child.
* The consistency between all caregivers is necessary for a true and lasting change in the child’s behavior to occur.