

A Word From the Executive Director



Hello Third Way Center Community!

Happy February and happy Black History Month. So much to be aware of, to learn, and to stand up for.

It's my 1-year anniversary as Executive Director, and oh what a ride it's been. I continue to be a work in progress; probably always will be. Actually, I hope I always progress in one way or another. I feel so much joy in being part of this organization and having this job.

Maya Angelou said, "I do my best because I'm counting on you to count on me."

From the beginning, I have been challenged. My first year as a therapist, two kids I was working with got into a terrible car crash. One died, and the other was in a coma. The one in a coma eventually recovered. They were not where they were supposed to be. I was on call and was at the hospital with her parents when she was pronounced dead. That is when I truly realized that Third Way was way more than a job. The responsibility was profound and overwhelming. That 17-year-old woman, with all her grit, feisty emotion, and tainted struggles, taught me more about the commitment needed to work with these kids than anything else. The experience was devastating and life-changing. I stayed in contact with her parents until their passing a few years ago.

The kids at Third Way are resilient in so many ways. They are also complicated, unique, and often experience inadequate, inappropriate, or little or no support. Our current system does not work. What truly matters is understanding the client's life experiences and responding with clinical and ethical expertise. Developing trust through empathy and relationships. Our system seems to have forgotten that, but we haven't.

We do better in groups. We can be stronger, challenge each other, and have a louder voice. It is disheartening to know that racism, discrimination, and extreme

divisiveness continue to live with and among us. But we don't have to accept it. We can teach, address it, serve as role models, and be less defensive about our own biases.

Thank you for being part of our community. And tell your friends. It takes all of us to make this world a better place.