

Hi, this is Wayne Rivers at The Family Business Institute. Thanks for tuning in; we appreciate it. This week, I want to talk about why your family is dysfunctional, and your family business.

Interesting story, and I'd be interested to hear your comments about any of this blog, in particular, but I was at a meeting with Brian from Kansas a few weeks ago and Brian said, "One of the most valuable things that we get from The Family Business Institute is the weekly blog." And I said, "Really? Gosh, thanks Brian. Maybe we should start charging for it." He said, "Well, it's not that good." So, we're gonna keep the blog free for the foreseeable future, no worries there. And thanks for keeping me humble, Brian.

So, last week, we talked about how you're not doing your kids any favors by spoiling them, basically, and you need to push them and challenge them and make them a little bit miserable. So, my daughter told me a story. My daughter sees a counselor, as I think a lot of young people do, and I think that's a great thing, by the way. I mean, sometimes talking to Mom and Dad just doesn't get it, and having a third party that's not judging and that's objective about your issues is a great thing, but anyway.

She's got this counselor she likes and she went and she saw the counselor, and she was talking about relationship trouble. And the counselor kind of did a turn on her and she said, "Tell me how you write a paper." My daughter's an academic; she's just brilliant. She's presenting a paper at the University of Virginia next month. I mean, just really ... for a junior in college, is really blazing new trails.

So, the counselor, "Well, Kate, tell me. How do you write a paper?" And Kate said, "I told her about annotating, looking for patterns in my annotations, coming up with a tentative argument. Looking for relevant sources, using them to supplement my thoughts about the primary text, refining theses and topic statements, looking for themes, etc."

And then she said, "Tell me how you pick your boyfriends." And Kate knew where this was going, she faltered a bit and she said, "Well, that's pretty intuitive." And the counselor said, "That's why your grades are better than your relationships." Great advice. I love a blunt, spoken counselor like that.

But that's why your family is dysfunctional. Right? If you think about your business processes, if you think about your selling process or your manufacturing process or your construction/delivery processes, or whatever it is, you've got those pretty well built out, and you've got people, really good people to help you with them.

So, you've got step one, step two, step three, step four. And then, at the end of the week, there's a big family blow-up. You've had a good week and you got a new client and you start a new project and you did all this stuff, and then there's a family blow-up on Friday afternoon and it just feels like your whole damn life has fallen apart and all those successes mean nothing because the family harmony you so desire has been disrupted.

Well, the reason that your family blows up and breaks and causes you emotional heartache and pain is because you've got systems and processes for all your business stuff. You don't have any systems and processes for your

family stuff. How you communicate, how you resolve conflict, what you don't say to each other, you know, where are the land mines. Where are the barriers, where are the boundaries that we are not allowed to cross, because crossing those boundaries is a problem for somebody? Healthy boundaries. That's a whole different issue.

So, having those rules and guidelines and steps and processes that work so well in your business also work well in your family. And if your family's dysfunctional and if you have blow-ups and disagreements all the time, well, you're basically reaping what you sow. You're not investing any time in coming up with better processes and steps and standards and practices for your family and that's just as important.

And by family, I mean your business family, as well: the people you spend so much time with a given week. So, with that, this is Wayne Rivers at The Family Business Institute. Thank you, and we'd love to have your comments below.