

MY VIEW



Founder Wayne Fortin



TELL ME MORE

I began my mental health career as a marriage counselor. For many reasons it soon became obvious that I was not cut out for that particular counseling specialty.

But before my career as a marriage counselor ended, something happened at one of my sessions that would influence my mental health career for years to come.

That session began with a wife (I'll call her Sandy) complaining about her husband (I'll call him Rob). After about 10 minutes, Sandy stopped, looked directly at Rob, and said: "*But I know that you love me.*" This blunt statement immediately got Rob's attention (and mine!).

I could see Rob's mind racing, and he began asking Sandy what he did or said that conveyed his love for her. Was it that he bought her nice jewelry? Was it because he was a good father? Was it because he was a good provider? Sandy's answer to all of these questions was NO.

By now both Rob and me were on the edge of our seats, waiting for the answer to the big question: How did Sandy know that Rob loved her despite all of her complaints?

Finally, Sandy gave us the answer: *Honey, when I tell you something that happened to me, you always say **tell me more**.* What struck me about Sandy's statement was the huge positive impact these three simple words had on her and their ability to cut through all the negativity in their marriage.

Although this counseling session was my introduction to how important it is to show interest in others, I've seen many other examples throughout my career. Most recently, my wife and I met via zoom with the staff of an organization we support in Vietnam. They wanted to update us on the work they are doing to help orphans. At the end of their presentation, I asked them a series of **tell me more** type questions. I was very interested not only about their program, but also about how helping organizations operate in Vietnam. At the end of my questioning, I wondered "*Did I ask too many questions?*" ... "*Were they offended by my questioning?*"

At the end of our meeting, I expected the executive director to do what she always did... thank us for our financial support. But much to our surprise what she said was "*Thank you for your questions and for being so interested in us.*"

Thanks to my encounter with Sandy and Rob years ago, I realized early in my career the importance of showing interest in others. I saw firsthand how 3 words ... **TELL ME MORE**... can change a relationship for the better. And I believe these 3 words can change the world for the better. Imagine a world where everyone is interested in one another and where they regularly invite each other to **TELL ME MORE**.

Wayne Fortin, Founder
Trauma Intervention Programs, Inc.
760-809-8471
Fortin.Wayne@gmail.com

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