



March 1, 1999

Jack Niehaus, LISW
106 Wellington Place
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

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Dear Jack:

As the executive director of a social service agency, I have confronted numerous internal and external issues for which there were no clearly defined solutions. The bimonthly consultation meetings I have had with you over the past five years have given me a forum not only where I can freely and confidentially discuss these issues, but also access to your knowledge and experience in gaining insight and awareness on how best to respond.

Creating a healthy working environment where staff feel valued and the product adds value to the community is not an event. It is an ongoing process. For me it is dealing with clinical, administrative and financial matters one situation at a time, while remaining focused on the vision, mission and public purpose of the organization.

Through your helpful guidance, First Step Home has been able to increase it's annual operating budget from thirty thousand dollars to over one million dollars giving us the opportunity to serve significantly more women in need of substance abuse treatment and their families. The impact on the community has been remarkable.

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With this growth my role as executive director has also changed and expanded. However, the challenges of growth have been lessened by knowing I have the type of professional support that you offer. As most of us know from experience, when our confidence level is high we are much more apt to think clearly and face new challenges from a position of strength. Consistently making major decisions in isolation is not healthy for an individual or an organization, yet many executives do not have the advantage of peer support. Therefore, I am so pleased you have decided to expand your consultation practice to other executive directors, chief executive officers and chairpersons.

If you have anyone who would be interested in discussing the benefits of executive consultation with me, please feel free to have them call.

Annie F. Bennett, MSW, LISW
Executive Director

Sincerely

Annie F. Bennett, MSW, LISW
Executive Director
2118 St. Michael St.
Cincinnati, OH 45204
513 921 7324 - FAX 513 921 2375
E-mail: firststephome@worldnet.att.net