

Box of Crayons: What School Social Work is All About



The students on our caseload need us to stay present with them. Believe me, it is not always an easy task. If you remember the very cool box of crayola crayons; the one with 64 colors and the sharpener in the back? Well honestly, there were probably more colors in their than anyone needed, but oh the possibilities that were spread before you with all of those variations on blue, green, red, yellow, orange and purple. I found a box and it reminded me of my caseload. There are some crayons that are well used, the tips are flattened, the paper is torn away and some are broken.... these remind me of my clients that sit in my green chair daily or test limits everyday to see if they still exist, great colors and well worn. There are some crayons that need attention, but with some guidance can be finessed into most of the pictures I draw, aren't those the kids that fit well into our groups and classrooms? There are some colors that go neglected, cornflower blue or burnt sienna, very good colors but those tips don't seem to be worn down with equal muster which than challenges me to make sure that I see them and their potential. It is my responsibility to include them in the canvas I create and challenge others to see their possibilities as well.

Which brings me to the possibility with the sharpener in back, the opportunity to regroup and get back on track with my colors, not to throw them away or into the broken crayon box, but to sharpen them back up and get them back into working order. I think the box of crayons is what school social work is really all about – it is about seeing the array of students, it is seeing the students who are not wanting to be seen, it is seeing and directing the students who are well worn and tested, it is believing in the possibility of including other colors and ideas into a canvas, even when others may think the canvas is complete. It is seeing that there is more possibility when another avenue is approached, like sharpening the worn out colors so that they are fresh again, albeit shorter, but ready to get back in the cue.

At the end of the day, it is the **HOPE** that keeps me going. It is the **POSSIBILITY** of what tomorrow brings and it the **BELIEF** that each one of my students, their families and my colleagues have a **SPARK** within them that drives their passions and desires that can make the difference in their lives.

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