

My 10-year history with VCA has been more behind the scenes, so you might not know me very well. With this in mind, I'd like to inform you of my personal life goal statement: MAPDISEL. It stands for: Make A Positive Difference In Someone Else's Life. I endeavor to remain grounded in this purpose in all my affairs.

As VAMCD Co-President, I have dealt with very unique pressures and stressors that required me to maintain strict boundaries, protect the division, and help everyone involved to maintain their dignity. I think this is a skill that sometimes gets overlooked when emotions get involved, when those are the times we need to employ it the most. Through my use of this skill and other leadership qualities, the VAMCD has had one of the better years in its history, in spite of the challenges. We have a full, engaged, working board, for the first time in years. We meet as a leadership team almost weekly, to remain focused on our goals and objectives. We also held our own conference (hopefully the "first annual").

With this history, and as a counselor educator who is a school counselor with an LPC, I know the importance of unity. I think it is time to get back to basics in VCA. Why are we here? Our vision statement claims we stand for "Equity, *unity* and public support for professional counseling" [emphasis added]. Let's unite behind our common cause and leverage our differences, utilizing them to increase the range of our ideas, rather than viewing them as challenges or deficits.

Regardless of your choice, I am dedicated to doing my part to MAPDISEL. I hope you remain so, as well.