

**How to respond to FASD logic
(One track mind and concrete, in the moment thinking.)**

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Example:

This 19 year old broke probation and took a \$40 taxi ride to his parent's house carrying his pet gerbil in a birdcage. The taxi driver is demanding his money while the young man is frantically asking his mother for food for the gerbil.

The young man had run out of food for the gerbil and knew that his mother would know what to feed it. He could not be sidetracked. Until the gerbil was fed he could not talk about or think about his probation order, where he was supposed to be at that time, or the need to pay the taxi driver.

Analysis:

This is thinking in "parallel lines." He knew about the other things that needed to be done, but could only think about them after the thing he was over-focusing on was completed. There was no connection in his mind between what he was going to do right now with the gerbil, and everything else he had to do that day.

Example:

When he was on a day trip to Vancouver and ran out of money this same young man obtained \$200 emergency funding for a place to stay and a trip back to Vancouver Island. He was told, "You can't get any more emergency funding for the next two weeks." Two weeks later when he was back at home on Vancouver Island, he had to go back to Vancouver so that he could get the emergency funding.

Analysis:

This man is not able to respond to "discussion" about what else he might have done. When he is over-focused in the "here and now," that is all he can think about.

Approach:

Don't expect a person who functions with a one-track-mind and concrete, in-the-moment thinking to understand alternative options. Help him complete his immediate concern. Then assist him to refocus on what he has to do right now.

Example:

Another young man will predictably fail if told, "We have to do this first, then that." He will focus on the "that." If you try to say, "Just a minute," he will say, "No, I have to do that." There is no stopping him without evoking an explosion.

Analysis:

A simple test to find out if someone is thinking "in the moment" and is limited to concrete, one-step functioning is to ask the following question:

"What will happen next?"

Watch for signs of confusion. Watch for his descriptive response that confuses verb tenses.

Approach:

The correct way to give guidance to someone who is "one-track" minded is to say, "We need to do this now. Let's do this now." Then you may receive a cooperative response.