

Communication Skills Lab 2: Exploring Skills



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Personal Topics for Discussion

List three or four personal topics you have some strong feelings about and would be willing to discuss with someone else in the training during lab exercises.

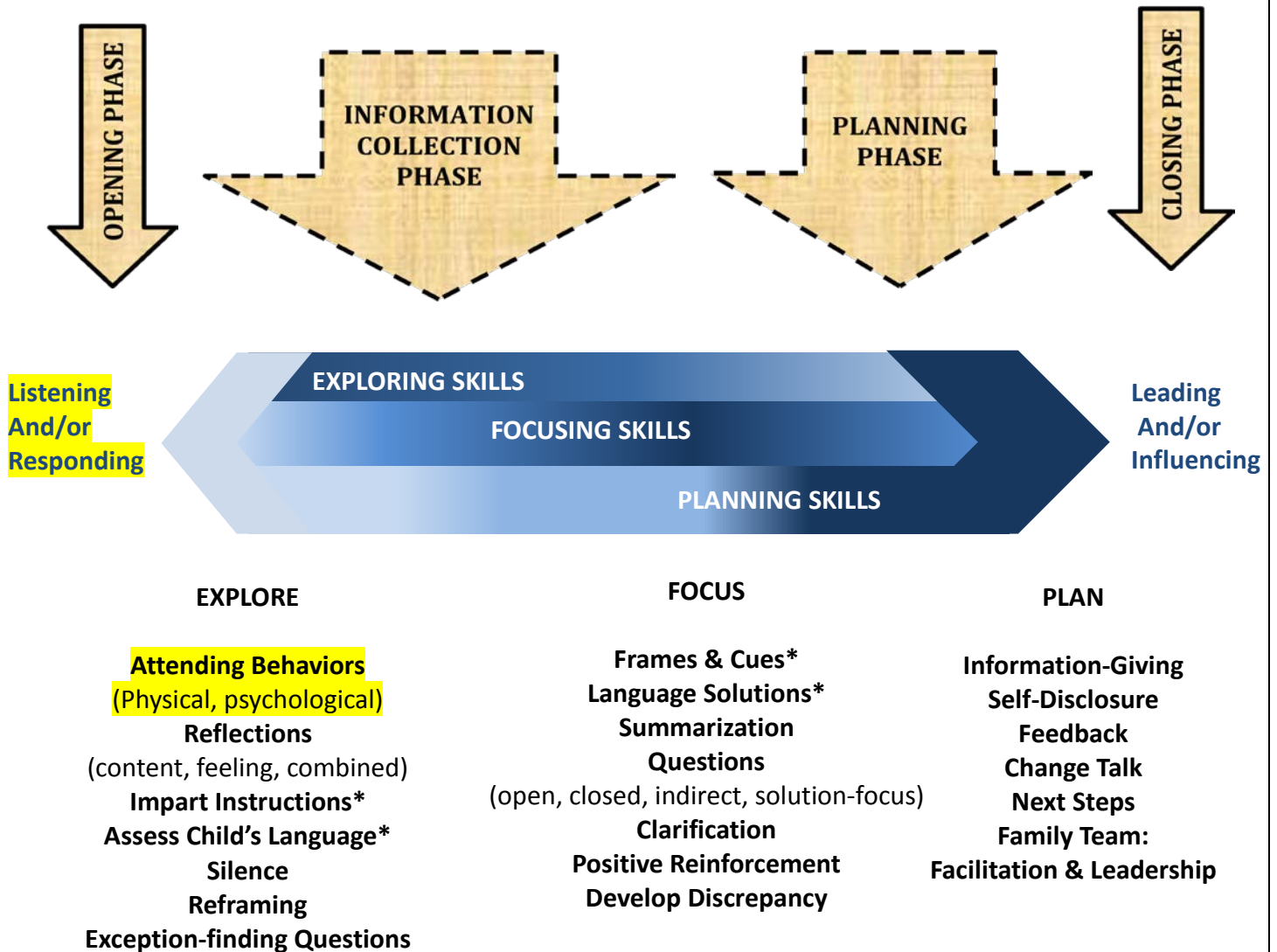
1.

2.

3.

4.

Engagement Skills Continuum



*Terms unique to child interviews or persons with developing English proficiency.

Physical Attending

Use of Environment

Comfortable

Minimize barriers

Minimize distractions

Personal attire

Use of Body

Gestures

Eye contact

Voice quality

Facial expression

Body posture

Activity 1: Determining Meaning of Non-Verbal Behaviors

Nonverbal Behavior	Interpretation
Brisk, erect walk	
Standing with hands on hips	
Sitting with legs crossed, foot kicking slightly	
Sitting, legs apart	
Arms crossed on chest	
Walking with hands in pockets, shoulders hunched	
Hand to cheek	
Touching, slightly rubbing nose	
Rubbing the eye	
Hands clasped behind back	
Head resting in hand, eyes downcast	
Rubbing hands	
Sitting with hands clasped behind head, legs crossed	
Open palm	
Pinching bridge of nose, eyes closed	
Tapping or drumming fingers	
Steepling fingers	
Patting/fondling hair	

Psychological Attending

Observing Family Member's:

Congruence

Use of voice

Non-verbal behavior

Responding with:

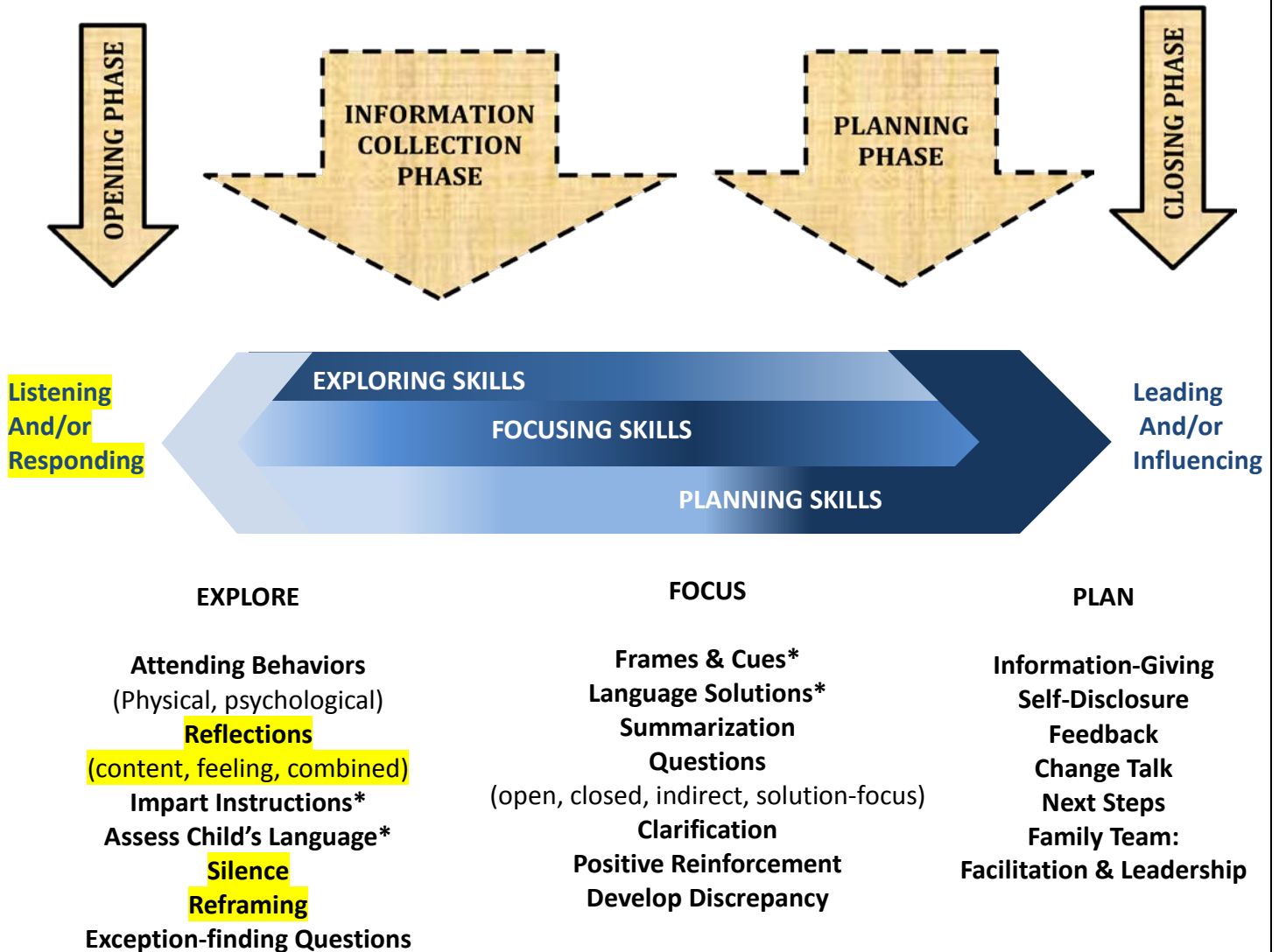
Verbal following

Minimal encouragers

Congruence with family member

Unit 2.2: Reflections and Reframing

Engagement Skills Continuum



*Terms unique to child interviews or persons with developing English proficiency.

Purposes for Using Reflections

Reflects back information and gives person interviewed an opportunity to affirm and offer more information about:

Content

Emotions

Content and Feelings

Pleasant Affective States

Love, Affection, Concern

Elation, Joy

admired	interested	amused	happy
adorable	just	at ease	humorous
affectionate	kind	blissful	inspired
agreeable	kindly	brilliant	in high spirits
altruistic	kind-hearted	calm	jovial
amiable	lenient	cheerful	joyful
benevolent	lovable	comical	jubilant
benign	loving	content	magnificent
big-hearted	mellow	delighted	majestic
brotherly	mild	ecstatic	marvelous
caring	moral	elated	overjoyed
charitable	neighborly	elevated	pleased
Christian	nice	enchanted	pleasant
comforting	obliging	enthusiastic	proud
congenial	open	exalted	satisfied
conscientious	optimistic	excellent	serene
considerate	patient	excited	splendid
cooperative	peaceful	fantastic	superb
cordial	pleasant	fine	terrific
courteous	polite	fit	thrilled
dedicated	reasonable	gay	tremendous
devoted	receptive	glad	triumphant
easygoing	reliable	glorious	turned on
empathetic	respectful	good	vivacious
fair	responsible	grand	witty
faithful	sensible	gratified	wonderful
forgiving	sympathetic	great	
friendly	sweet		
generous	tender		
genuine	thoughtful		
giving	tolerant		
good	truthful		
good-humored	trustworthy		
good-natured	understanding		
helpful	unselfish		
honest	warm		
honorable	warm-hearted		
hospitable	well-meaning		
humane	wise		

Pleasant Affective States (Continued)

Potency

able	important
adequate	influential
assured	intense
authoritative	lion-hearted
bold	manly
brave	mighty
capable	powerful
competent	robust
confident	secure
courageous	self-confident
daring	self-reliant
determined	sharp
durable	skillful
dynamic	spirited
effective	stable
energetic	stouthearted
fearless	strong
firm	sure
forceful	tough
gallant	virile
hardy	well-equipped
healthy	well-put-together
heroic	

Unpleasant Affective States

UNPLEASANT

abandoned
 alien
 alienated
 alone
 annihilated
 awful
 battered
 below par
 blue
 burned
 cast off
 cheapened
 crushed
 debased
 defeated
 degraded
 dejected
 demolished
 depressed
 desolate
 despairing
 despised
 despondent
 destroyed
 discarded
 discouraged
 disfavored
 dismal
 done for
 downcast
 downhearted
 downtrodden
 dreadful
 estranged
 excluded
 forlorn
 forsaken
 gloomy
 glum

horrible
 humiliated
 hurt
 in the dumps
 jilted
 kaput
 left out
 loathed
 lonely
 lonesome
 lousy
 low
 miserable
 mishandled
 mistreated
 moody
 mournful
 obsolete
 ostracized
 out of sorts
 overlooked
 pathetic
 pitiful
 rebuked
 regretful
 rejected
 reprimanded
 rotten
 ruined
 rundown
 sad
 stranded
 tearful
 terrible
 unhappy
 unloved
 valueless
 washed up
 whipped

Distress

afflicted
 anguished
 at the feet of
 at the mercy of
 awkward
 baffled
 bewildered
 blameworthy
 clumsy
 confused
 constrained
 disgusted
 disliked
 displeased
 dissatisfied
 distrustful
 disturbed
 doubtful
 foolish
 futile
 grievous
 helpless
 hindered
 impaired
 impatient

imprisoned
 lost
 nauseated
 offended
 pained
 perplexed
 puzzled
 ridiculous
 sickened
 silly
 skeptical
 speechless
 strained
 suspicious
 swamped
 the plaything of
 the puppet of
 tormented
 touchy
 ungainly
 unlucky
 unpopular
 unsatisfied
 unsure

Unpleasant Affective States (Continued)

Impotency, Inadequacy

anemic	infirm
broken	insecure
broken down	insufficient
chicken-hearted	lame
cowardly	maimed
crippled	meek
debilitated	nerveless
defective	paralyzed
deficient	powerless
demoralized	puny
disabled	shaken
effeminate	shaky
exhausted	sickly
exposed	small
feeble	trivial
flimsy	uncertain
fragile	
frail	unfit
harmless	unimportant
helpless	unqualified
important	unsound
inadequate	unsubstantiated
incapable	useless
incompetent	vulnerable
indefensible	weak
ineffective	weak-hearted
inefficient	
inept	
inferior	

Anger, Hostility

agitated	hypercritical
aggravated	ill-tempered
aggressive	impatient
angry	inconsiderate
annoyed	inhuman
antagonistic	insensitive
arrogant	intolerable
bad-tempered	irritated
belligerent	mad
bigoted	malicious
biting	mean
bloodthirsty	murderous
blunt	nasty
bullying	obstinate
callous	opposed
cold-blooded	oppressive
combative	outraged
cantankerous	perturbed
contrary	poisonous
cool	prejudiced
corrosive	pushy
cranky	rebellious
critical	reckless
cross	resentful
cruel	revengeful
deadly	rough
dictatorial	rude
disagreeable	ruthless
discontented	sadistic
enraged	savage
envious	severe
fierce	spiteful
furious	stern
gruesome	stormy
hard	unfeeling
hard-hearted	unfriendly
harsh	unruly
hateful	vicious

Unpleasant Affective States (Continued)

Fear, Anxiety

afraid
 agitated
 alarmed
 anxious
 apprehensive
 bashful
 desperate
 embarrassed
 fearful
 fidgety
 frightened
 full of dread
 hesitant
 horrified
 ill at ease
 insecure
 intimidated
 jealous

jittery
 jumpy
 nervous
 on edge
 overwhelmed
 panicky
 restless
 scared
 shaky
 shy
 strained
 tense
 terrified
 terror-stricken
 timid
 uncomfortable
 uneasy
 worried

Belittling, Criticism, Scorn

abused
 belittled
 branded
 carped
 censured
 criticized
 defamed
 deflated
 deprecated
 depreciated
 derided
 diminished
 discredited
 disdained
 disgraced
 disparaged
 humiliated
 ignored
 jeered
 lampooned
 laughed at
 libeled

made light of
 maligned
 minimized
 mocked
 neglected
 not taken
 seriously
 overlooked
 poked fun at
 pooh-poohed
 pulled to pieces
 put down ridiculed

 roasted
 scoffed at
 scorned
 shamed
 slammed
 slandered
 slighted
 thought nothing of
 underestimated
 underrated

Activity 2: Reflecting Content and Feelings

1. "I've been looking for a job for three weeks and nothing seems to be open."
2. "I don't know, the night before he left, he beat me up pretty bad. I don't know what he'd do if he thought I put the law on him to get child support."
3. "My husband and I have talked about it and we don't feel that we could adopt a child with a severe handicap. We have one handicapped child now and really don't feel like we could handle another, both from the financial and emotional points of view."
4. "What with all the complications and everything, the doctor made me quit work and stay in bed the last couple of months before she was born. I really got behind with all my bills and of course I lost my job."
5. "I'm pretty lucky because my mother can take care of Javon, and I don't have to worry about him while I'm at work."
6. "I checked into night school, and there's a bookkeeping course I could take. The only thing is, who would take care of the kids while I'm gone?"

7. “Ms. Johnson from the employment office called me this morning and said she thinks I have a good chance at that job I applied for last week. They must be interested, because they want to interview me again. Wouldn’t it be great if they really did hire me?”

8. “Well, you know I got that job I applied for last week, and I’m supposed to start Monday. So, I’ve been trying to find some place for Donny and Darcy to stay when they get out of school until I get home from work. I’ve called about 10 different places and they don’t have any room, or they can’t pick them up from school. So, I’m kind of afraid I won’t find any place by Monday.”

9. “I think it could be a lot of fun to have a baby and take care of it. I’ve always really enjoyed kids. But I really don’t think he’s going to give me money. I mean he wasn’t really thrilled with the idea, anyway. I don’t know how I could support it if I did keep the baby.”

10. “I don’t like the way that woman is taking care of him. I though you said he’s getting taken care of in foster care as good as in his own home. I think I should take him back home. She just doesn’t treat him right.”

11. “I don’t know where the children’s father is, I haven’t heard from him in five years, not since he ran off. He’s never called or tried to see the kids or sent any money or anything.”

12. “Her teacher said that she seems to have a photographic memory. Yet in math they’re using flash cards and she can’t seem to memorize them as well. But she can look at one word when you’re reading and she doesn’t have to be told that word anymore. If she doesn’t know it one time and you tell her, she knows it then.”

Interviewing Dangers to Avoid

Stereotyped reactions

Pretending understanding

Overreaching

Under-reaching

Long-windedness

Inattention to non-verbal cues

Guidelines for Effective Feedback

- **Specific**
 - It isolates the practice of behavior to be affirmed or changed.

- **Behavioral**
 - It explicitly describes observable actions and behaviors.

- **Useful**
 - It helps the receiver know what to do differently.

- **Helpful**
 - The motives for giving the feedback are to be helpful, not harmful.

- **“I” Message**
 - The sender needs to claim ownership of the message when providing effective feedback.

Activity 3: Demonstrating Reflection Skills

What effective attending skills did you see demonstrated?

What were some of the effective reflections you heard?

What would enhance the child welfare professional's effectiveness?

Reframing

Reframing:

- An empathetic reflection of a purposeful, positive intention.
- A skill and a tool that child welfare professionals can use in their work with families. Reframing is a way to focus on the purposeful, positive intention or characteristic being expressed through family members' behaviors, feelings or statements.
- Does not mean that we agree or endorse the family member's behavior.
- It is a technique used by the worker to help the family member consider whether the family member's behavior is really congruent with what the family member wants, particularly for their child or children.

Lab Activity 4: Reframing Child Attributes

Negative Perspective	Positive Reframe
Clingy	
Compulsive	
Conceited	
Crabby	
Dawdles	
Demanding	
Dependent	
Doodles	
Dramatic	
Fearful	
Foolish	
Fussy about food/clothes	
Goofy	
Impulsive	
Loud	
Manipulative	
Mean	
Messy	
Mouthy	
Naughty	
Nosey	
Not focusing	
Picky-eater	
Quiet	
Rigid	

Negative Perspective	Positive Reframe
Shy	
Silly	
Spoiled	
Stubborn	
Talkative	
Talks-back	
Tattletale	

Lab Activity 5: Developing Reframes

Instructions: In your small groups, discuss the following statements made by family members.

1. You don't believe me. Why should I talk to you?

Reframe:

2. Coming to these meetings is a waste of time.

Reframe:

3. You people don't know what you're doing!

Reframe:

4. I've said before that I'd stop drinking, but this time I mean it.

Reframe:

5. I have no friends, I'm all alone and life is miserable.

Reframe:

6. Every time something goes wrong, they blame me.

Reframe:

7. The kids walk all over her and I have to be the heavy.

Reframe:

8. Why shouldn't I do drugs, all my friends do?

Reframe:

9. My wife and I just don't talk anymore?

Reframe:

10. I don't understand why people keep forcing me to do things. They need to leave me alone.

Reframe:

11. He keeps promising not to hit me anymore, but he can't help it. I really want to try and make it work with him.

Reframe:

12. My wife and I were fine until you started coming around. Now she won't listen to me.

Reframe:

Exception-Finding Questions

- “Tell me about the times that the problem does not occur.”

The Skill of Silence

- “The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. The most important thing we give each other is our attention.”

Lab Activity 6: Demonstrating Exploring Skills

Attending Behavior Observed

Reflections Used

Use of Silence

Unit 2.3: Opening Phase of Interview

Opening Phase of Interview

Interview Phase	Purpose
1. Opening Phase	Establish Rapport 1. Introduce Self 2. Provide Self Expression Establish a Working Relationship 1. Explain Purpose of Visit 2. Address Immediate Concerns (anything prohibiting interview from moving forward)
2. Information Collection Phase	Gather Information Ensure Accuracy of Information
3. Planning Phase	Information Giving and Directions Influencing
4. Closing Phase	Check Family Understanding Follow-up Information Requested Expectation of Further Visits Appreciation

Words to Build Rapport

Words to build rapport	versus Not rapport building...
Someone has shared concerns .	Someone has accused you of child abuse .
I need to discuss these concerns with you.	I am responsible for investigating your family .
You have the right to be heard.	I have the authority to gather this information.
What would make someone be concerned?	What did you do to make someone concerned?
I really need to hear your perspectives .	I need to hear your side .
I don't know what it's like to be a parent in your shoes.	I know a lot about parenting and child development even though I am not a parent.
What could I do to gain your trust?	I can't help the way that last investigator/case manager came across to you .

Lab Activity 7: Building Rapport Activity

Write your observations of the worker's behaviors.

Observations	Interview A	Interview B
What effective attending skills did you see demonstrated?		
What were some of the effective reflections you heard?		
What would enhance the child welfare professional's effectiveness?		
What is a reflection of feeling that you would make?		

Unit 2.4: Wrap-Up and Preparing for Field Shadowing

Tips for Maintaining a Positive Attitude

Remember that:

- No parent, spouse or caregiver intends to fail with caregiving responsibilities.
- Most caregivers do not intend to harm their children; abuse and neglect result from complex circumstances.
- Most related caregivers love their children and want to provide quality care.
- Despite their behavior, people who are angry and out of control are in psychological pain and feel vulnerable and afraid.
- Everyone wants to feel in touch and each person has a hand extended for a connection, although it may be well-concealed.
- All behavior is meaningful; don't disregard what any behavior is trying to express or the effects of environment on behavior.
- Most people can change given sufficient support and assistance.
- Many parents who abuse and neglect their children also were abused and neglected. Because of the trauma they suffered, they never felt cared about or loved.

Lab Activity 8: Maintaining Self Awareness

If you are to help others clarify their feelings and emotions, you must be in touch with your own emotional states. A number of emotional states are listed below. Describe the emotion you feel as concretely as possible. How does your body react? What happens inside you? What do you feel like doing?

Example 1

Emotion: When I feel accepted,
Physical Sensation: My body feels relaxed.
 I feel warm inside.
Behavior: I am free to be myself
 I can let my guard
 down. I can share
 myself
 I can use my strengths more effectively.

Example 2

Emotion: When I feel scared
Physical Sensation: My mouth dries up
 there are butterflies in my stomach
Behavior: I runaway
 I talk to someone who is
 understanding
 I'm unable to concentrate
 I withdraw

Complete the self-assessment for the four feelings on next page.

Self-Assessment: Maintaining Self Awareness

1. **Emotion:** When I feel anxious,

- **Physical Sensation:**

- **Behavior:**

2. **Emotion:** When I feel frustrated,

- **Physical Sensation:**

- **Behavior:**

3. **Emotion:** When I feel repulsed,

- **Physical Sensation:**

- **Behavior:**

4. **Emotion:** When I feel defensive,

- **Physical Sensation:**

- **Behavior:**

Exploring Skills Proficiency Continuum

**Irrelevant,
Hurtful**



**Deeply
understood,
Gains insight**

1.0

1.5

2.0

2.5

3.0

3.5

4.0

An irrelevant or hurtful response that does not effectively attend to the surface feelings of the person being interviewed. However, in instances where content is communicated accurately, it may raise the level of response.

A response that only partially communicates an awareness of the surface feelings of the person interviewed. When content is communicated

accurately, it may raise the level of response; conversely, it may lower the level of the response when communicated inaccurately.

A response conveying that the person interviewed is understood at the level he or she is expressing himself or herself; surface feelings are accurately reflected. Content is not essential, but when included, it must be accurate. If it is inaccurate, the level of the response may be lowered.

A response conveying that the person interviewed is understood beyond his or her level of immediate awareness; underlying feelings are identified. Content is used to complement affect in adding deeper meaning. If content is inaccurate, the level of the response may be lowered. Conveying that the person interviewed is understood at the level he or she is expressing himself or herself; surface feelings are accurately reflected. Content

is not essential, but when included, it must be accurate. If it is inaccurate, the level of the response may be lowered.

A response conveying that the person interviewed is understood beyond his or her level of immediate awareness; underlying feelings are identified. Content is used to complement affect in adding deeper meaning. If content is inaccurate, the level of the response may be lowered.

Proficiency Ratings for Continuum

Level 4.0 Insight gained – Content, expressed and non-expressed feelings, exception finding questions used. Feels listened to and helped by interviewer.

Level 3.0 Feels heard—Content, feelings expressed and some un-expressed are accurately reflected. Feels listened to and understood.

Level 2.0 Not heard—Content expressed, surface feelings only reflected. Interview not viewed as helpful.

Level 1.0 Not heard, hurt or offended—Inaccurate content and ineffective attending to surface feelings. Irrelevant or hurtful interview.

Working Agreement

1. Explain to person you are shadowing that you have been tasked to observe their interviewing techniques. IF asked, feel free to share a copy of the field shadowing guide you are required to complete or share the topics verbally.
2. Ask them if they would introduce you to person being interviewed as a “trainee” who is there to observe them, not the family member!
3. Ask person you are shadowing to tell you a little bit about the interview they are going to conduct and what they want to accomplish.
4. Ask person you are shadowing if it is okay for you to jot down observations during their interview.
5. Remember that you are there to shadow only!
6. Do not use your cell phone for calls or texting during the interview.

Field Observations: Interview A

Opening of Interview

Was greeting respectful?

Was purpose explained?

Was personal expression provided?

Was purpose of meeting explained in an understandable way?

If necessary, were immediate concerns addressed?

Attending Skills

Non-verbal behaviors of worker that demonstrated listening:

Recognition of non-verbal cues of person interviewed:

Matching of non-verbal behavior of person interviewed:

Reflections

Examples of content reflections:

Examples of content and feeling reflections:

Reframing

Examples of positive reframes:

Exception-finding questions:

Is there anything you would have done differently?

Other observations of interviewing skills:

Field Observations: Interview B

Opening of Interview

Was greeting respectful?

Was purpose explained?

Was personal expression provided?

Was purpose of meeting explained in an understandable way?

If necessary, were immediate concerns addressed?

Attending Skills

Non-verbal behaviors of worker that demonstrated listening:

Recognition of non-verbal cues of person interviewed:

Matching of non-verbal behavior of person interviewed:

Reflections

Examples of content reflections:

Examples of content and feeling reflections:

Reframing

Examples of positive reframes:

Exception-finding questions:

Other observations of interviewing skills:

Field Observations: Interview C

Opening of Interview

Was greeting respectful?

Was purpose explained?

Was personal expression provided?

Was purpose of meeting explained in an understandable way?

If necessary, were immediate concerns addressed?

Attending Skills

Non-verbal behaviors of worker that demonstrated listening:

Recognition of non-verbal cues of person interviewed:

Matching of non-verbal behavior of person interviewed:

Reflections

Examples of content reflections:

Examples of content and feeling reflections:

Reframing

Examples of positive reframes:

Exception-finding questions:

Other observations of interviewing skills: