

Communication Skills Lab 3: Focusing Skills



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Unit 3.1: Debrief Field Observations

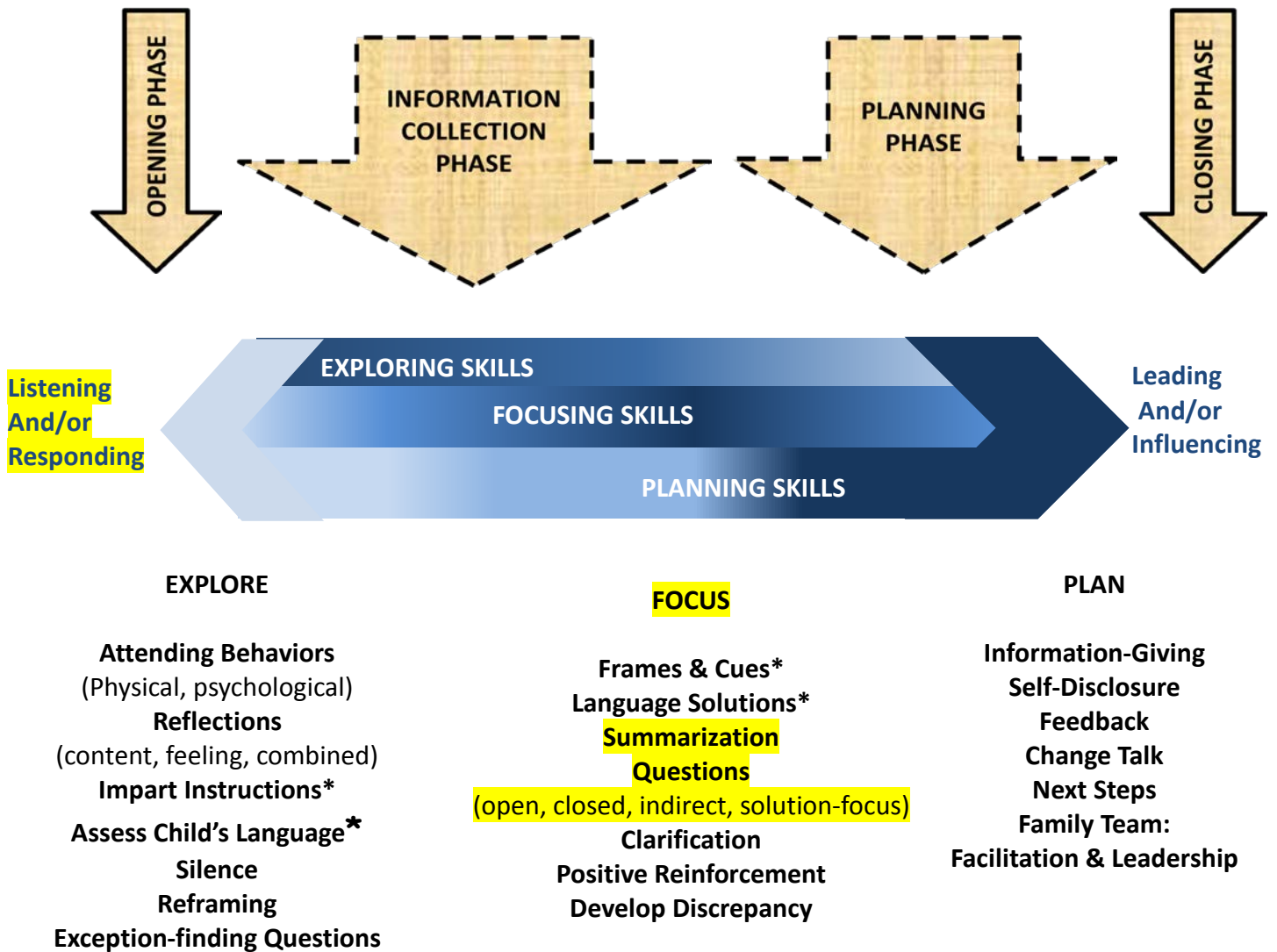
Working Agreements

Effective Exploring Skills Observed

- Interview Openings and Rapport Building
- Attending Skills
- Matching of Non-Verbal Behavior
- Reflection
- Reframes
- Exception-Finding Questions

Unit 3.2: Summarizations and Questions

Engagement Skills Continuum



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

Focusing Skills

The effective use of focusing skills, in combination with exploring skills, will result in gathering necessary descriptive details as well as family perspectives towards the safety of their children, how they are acting to protect, and their view of the necessity for change

Do I have an Accurate Understanding?

Focusing skills are used to clarify your understanding of information that you are confused, unsure, unclear or simply lost about.

Purpose of Summarization

- Structure the interview
(Opening & Closing)
- Check understanding
- Clarify for the family member
- Focus discussion
- Make transitions

Lab Activity 1: Observation of Summarization

1. How many summarizations did the listener make? (Jot down a few key words of each so you can identify when the worker used summarization.)

2. Did summarization primarily reflect content, feelings or both?

3. For what purposes did the listener use summarization?
 - a. Check understanding

 - b. Clarify for family member

 - c. Focus discussion

 - d. Make transition

 - e. Open the interview

 - f. Close the interview

4. Check the items that describe the listener's use of summarization:
 - a. Brief and concise

b. Included all important elements of content and feeling

c. Accepting tone

d. Checked accuracy

5. Check the items that describe the listener's ineffective use of summarization

a. Interrupted family member

b. Inaccurate

c. Left out important elements of content or feeling

d. Too long

Question Types: Effective and Ineffective

- **Effective:**
 - Keep interview going
 - Building rapport
 - Learning a lot of information
 - Person does not appear to feel judged by worker
 - Person appears empowered
- **Ineffective:**
 - Person being interviewed stays angry, defensive, hostile
 - Little or no information is gathered
 - No rapport building results

Question Types: Closed, Open and Indirect

- **Closed:**

Questions that require straight forward, one or two word answers.
- **Open:**

Questions that encourage people to use their own words and to elaborate on a topic.
- **Indirect:**

Statements made for the purpose of seeking sensitive information.

Question Types: Solution Focused

Solution Focused Questions

Seek clarity, coping strategies and other family solutions associated with family conditions or behaviors.

Past Successes

Examples of questions to identify past successes include:

- What child care and protection responsibilities have you provided in the past?
- What discipline methods have worked with your daughter?
- What goals have you achieved in your life so far?
- What activities have you and your child enjoyed together in the past?
- What activities work best for your child when he/she is sad or angry?
- After having been through what you've been through, how did you find enough strength to keep pushing on?
 - What do you need to do so that you'll feel good about yourself and in control of your life again?
 - You say that you're not sure that you want to continue working on your goals; what is it that has helped you to work on them up to now?

Coping Strategies

Examples of questions to identify coping strategies include:

- Under what circumstances is (the person's behavior, the family condition) likely to occur?
- What this happens (your partner has been drinking and becomes violent), what do you do?
- Considering how difficult this situation (partner violence, addiction/alcoholism, depression) is for you, how is it that you were able to get the children red and off to school, make it to this appointment, etc.)?
- What are the positives for you in continuing to stay in this relationship?
- What would have to be different for you not to be afraid?

Miracle Questions

- First ask what would be different about their surroundings, where they live.
- Second, ask what would be different about their children.
- Third, if relevant, ask about their significant other or relatives.
- Last, ask what would be different about the person themselves.

Counterproductive Questions

- Compound-questions
- Leading questions
- “Why” questions
- “Gotcha” questions

Lab Activity 2: Observation of Focusing Skills

- Read the hotline intake and the intake summary.
- Observe the interview of Jennae, and record your observations on the worksheet provided.

Chavez Hotline Intake

| | | | | | |
|---|------------------|--|---|---|---------------------------|
| Intake Name: | | Intake Number: | | County: | |
| Laura Chavez | | 2012-0123456 | | Lake | |
| Date/Time Intake Received | | Program Type | | Investigative Sub-Type | Provider Name |
| 9/16/xx at 18:25 | | Investigation | | Enhanced | |
| Worker Safety Concerns | | Prior Involvement | | Law Enforcement Notified | |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Response Time | | Name-Worker | | Name Supervisor | |
| Immediate: within 4 Hours | | Tarrin Reed | | Pamela Bennett | |
| I. Family Information | | | | | |
| Name-Family: | | | | Telephone Number | |
| Laura Chavez | | | | 505-123-4567 | |
| Address-Street | | Unit Designator | | City | State Zip |
| 123 Elm Street | | | | Altoona | FL |
| Primary Language: English | | Interpreter Needed: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Directions to House | | | | | |
| Participants | | | | | |
| Name | ID Number | Role | Gender | DOB | |
| Laura Chavez | 111111 | AP, PC, RN | F | 7/28/76 | |
| Est. Age | Ethnicity | Race | Disability | | |
| 35 | Caucasian | Caucasian | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | |
| Name | ID Number | Role | Gender | DOB | |
| Jennea Chavez | 111112 | CH, V | F | 1/16/03 | |
| Est. Age | Ethnicity | Race | Disability | | |
| 9 | African American | African American | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | |
| Name | ID Number | Role | Gender | DOB | |
| | | | | | |
| Est. Age | Ethnicity | Race | Disability | | |
| | | | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

| | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| AP=Alleged Perpetrator | PC=Parent/Caregiver | CH=Child in Home | RN=Report Name |
| HM=Household Member | SO=Significant Other | NM=Non-Household Member | V=Victim |

| Address and Phone Information | | | |
|-------------------------------|------|----------------|------------------|
| Name | Type | Address | Telephone Number |
| Laura Chavez | Home | 123 Elm Street | 505-123-4567 |

| Relationships | | |
|---------------|--------------|---------|
| Subject | Relationship | Subject |
| Laura Chavez | Mother | |
| Jenna Chavez | Daughter | |

| Alleged Maltreatment | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Alleged Victim | Maltreatment Code |
| Jenna Chavez | Inadequate Supervision |
| | |

| Location of Incident | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------|-----------------------|----------|
| Address-Street | Apt. | City | State | Zip Code |
| 123 Elm Street | | Altoona | FL | |
| Telephone Number-Home | Telephone Number-Work | | Telephone Number-Cell | |
| 505-123-4567 | NA | | NA | |

I. Narratives

Allegation Narrative

Extent of Maltreatment

Laura Chavez overdosed on prescribed medication and alcohol in the presence of Jenna Chavez (9). Laura was transported to St. Pete’s Hospital, after her sister, Christine Dupree, had arrived at the home and found Laura nearly incoherent. Christine Dupree call 911 and emergency services and Sheriff’s Department LE officers responded to the home. Jenna was transported with her mother to the hospital. Currently LE is requesting immediate assistance with placement of Jenna. The Deputy indicated that there are maternal grandparents present and available to care for Jenna and the grandparents’ contact information was provided. Safety concerns for Jenna were alleged to be Laura’s use of alcohol with Rx medication resulting in her incoherence and hence the neglect of Jenna; Laura’s limited parenting skills. Also alleged is that Laura has had “off and on” inadequately managed mental health issues along with possible poly-substance use.

Jenna is described as a really “good kid”. She is usually always clean and appears cared for when seen. Jenna expresses being concerned for her mother Laura. Laura is allegedly consuming alcohol with prescription medication which results in periods of incapacitation/incoherence, currently her hospitalization and hence her neglect of Jenna.

Laura is reported to have “very limited parenting skills.” Laura’s apparent emotional state is cause for serious concern. Laura is depressed and is not taking good care of herself or Jennae. Laura has isolated herself lately and does not spend much time with family. Laura has worked sporadically in past but has been unable to hold a job; allegedly, Laura got fired from her last job for stealing.

Allegedly, Laura barely provides minimum food, clothing, and shelter for Jennae. On several occasions Jennae has said she has not eaten or that she makes her own meals. Jennae may be taking care of herself a lot of the time. Allegedly, Laura does not supervise Jennae properly and Jennae has to care for herself too often; this is concerning as something may happen to Jennae.

Narrative for Worker Safety Concerns

NA

II. Agency Response

Recommendation

| Decision | Date/Time Decision Made | Reason |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| Screen In - Investigation | | Criteria met |

Explain

Child, caregiver, allegation, jurisdiction, means to locate, reasonable cause to suspect

Intake Supervisor Decision

| Decision | Date/Time Decision Made | Reason |
|----------|-------------------------|--------|
| Concur | | |

Explain

III. CI Unit Documentation

| First Call Attempted Date/Time | Completed Call Date/Time |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | |

Call Log

| Called Out By | Called To |
|---------------|-----------|
| | |

Reporter Narrative

| | | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|---|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Name-Worker | Sally Woods | | | |
| Name-Reporter | Deputy Miranda McArthur | Reporter Type | | |
| Reporter ID | 111546 | Reporter Requests Contact Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Report Method | Phone Call to Hotline |
| Home Phone | | Work Phone | 456-7890 | Other |

Reporter Narrative

Laura Chavez was transported to St. Pete’s hospital after being found unresponsive in her home. Laura is reported to have overdosed on prescription medication and alcohol. Her nine-year-old daughter was in the home with her at the time. There are no other residents reported to be residing with Laura and her daughter. Whereabouts of child’s father unknown at this time. Laura is being admitted to the hospital for care and it is unclear how long she will be hospitalized.

Source Information

LE ascertained contact information for maternal grandparents as follows:
Wayne and Carletta Hancock, Maternal Grandparents
2 County Line Road Altoona, FL 505-789-4561

Source Information

LE ascertained contact information for maternal aunt as follows:
Christine Dupree, Maternal Aunt
619 Linette Circle Altoona, FL 505-777-8899
Child left in temporary care of maternal aunt by LE

Chavez, Initial Contact Summary

The worker responded to the hospital, where Laura was in the process of being admitted. The doctors were admitting Laura for an undetermined length of time. Jennae was at the hospital with her aunt and her grandparents were in route to the hospital to meet with the CPI. The CPI was able to briefly see Laura, who asked about Jennae and wanted to have her parents take her. The CPI worker is planning on meeting with Laura’s parents once they arrive to the hospital. The CPI has not made contact with Jennae, but will plan to do so after meeting with the grandparents.

Chavez Worksheet

1. Record some examples of the use of an open, closed or indirect question, solution-focused, a reflection or a summarization.
 - a. Open-question

 - b. Closed-question

 - c. Indirect-question

 - d. Solution focused

 - e. Reflection

f. Summarization

g. Clarification

2. Record any examples of when the interviewer uses questions ineffectively.
 - a. Used a closed question when an open question would be more effective.

b. Compound-question

c. Loaded question

d. Statement question

e. "Why" question

f. "Gotcha" question

3. Write two or three other questions that you might have asked.

Unit 3.3: Interviewing to Enhance Motivation to Change



Stages of Change

The change process has been conceptualized as a sequence of stages through which people typically progress as they think about, initiate, and maintain new behaviors (Prochaska and DiClemente, 1984). You can be helpful at any point in the process of change by using appropriate motivational strategies that are specific to the change stage of the individual. It is important to note that the change process is cyclical, and individuals typically move back and forth between the stages and cycle through the stages at different rates.

Pre-Contemplation: Not Ready To Change!

The parent has no perception of having a problem or a need to change. The recommended motivational task is to increase the parent's perception of the risks and problems with their current behavior and to raise the parent's awareness about the behavior.

Contemplation: Thinking About It!

The parent begins to recognize that their behavior may be a problem and is ambivalent about making change. The motivational task for the CPI is to foster and evoke reasons to change and the risks of not changing and to help parents see that change is possible and achievable.

Preparation: Preparing for Action!

The parent makes a conscious decision to change and is able to identify motivation to change. The motivational task is to help the parent identify the best actions to take for change and to support the motivations for change.

Action: Taking Action!

The parent takes steps to change. The motivational task is to help the parent implement strategy and take positive action steps.

Maintenance: Maintaining a Good Thing for Life!

The parent actively works on sustaining change strategies and maintaining long-term change. The motivational task is to help the parent to identify triggers and use strategies to prevent relapse.

Relapse: Sliding Backwards (Stage of Change Specific to Substance Use: SAMSHA and NCSAW)

The parent slips (lapses) from a change strategy or returns to previous problem behavior patterns (relapse). The motivational task is to help the parent re-engage in the contemplation, preparation and action stages.

Spirit of Motivational Interviewing

Motivational interviewing is a way of interacting with individuals that is designed to reduce their natural resistance to change, and to elicit their reasons and motivation to change.

Positive Reinforcement

The behaviors we want to affirm and reinforce as professionals are any quality or behavior that boosts the self-efficacy of parents/caregivers.

When complimenting:

- Be as specific as you can about what the person did, or is thinking.
- Tie the compliment to the results that were, or might be, achieved.
- By focusing on specifics, you reinforce the outcome and what the person did to achieve that outcome.

Examples of statements that are affirming (Miller and Rollnick, 1991) of self-efficacy include:

- I think it's great that you want to do something about this problem.
- This must be very difficult for you.
- You're certainly a resourceful person to have been able to live with the problem this long and not fall apart.
- That's a good suggestion.
- It must be difficult for you to accept a day-to-day life so full for stress. If I were in your position, I would also find that difficult.

Develop Discrepancy

When you are able to help a person begin to think about, and discuss, contradictions between what they think, and what they do, you are helping them prepare for change.

Lab Activity 3: Observation of Interview with Laura

1. Record some examples of the use of an open, closed or indirect question, solution-focused, a reflection or a summarization.

a. Open-question

b. Closed-question

c. Indirect-question

d. Solution-focused

e. Reflection

f. Summarization

g. Clarification

h. Positive-reinforcement

i. Develop discrepancy

2. Record any examples of when the interviewer uses questions ineffectively.

a. Use a closed-question when an open-question would be more effective

b. Compound-question

c. Loaded question

d. Statement question

e. "Why" question

f. "Gotcha" question

3. Did the interview have a conversational flow?

4. Write two or three other questions that you might have asked:

Unit 3.4: Skill Demonstration

Examples of Questions to Learn about Your Child, Parenting, Discipline

Tell me about your child.

What is he or she good at?

What does he/she enjoy doing?

Tell me about your child's friends.

What do you think are your child's strengths?

What does a typical "day in the life" look like for your child?

Does the child have any current or past health related problems that affect him today?

Describe them for me. How does that affect your care of him/her?

How does your child behave/act in general?

Do you have any concerns about your child? What do you think are your child's challenges?

What does he or she struggle with? Are there times it doesn't happen?

Tell me about your child's behaviors that "push your buttons," escalate you, or cause you to feel angry? Tell me about the times that doesn't happen.

Does the child have any current or past developmental challenges? Trouble learning? Trouble behaving in school?

Does the child have any current or past mental health or behavior diagnoses that affect him today? Describe them for me.

What are the disciplinary approaches you use? Under what circumstances? Are they working?

Activity: Exploring and Focusing Skills Practice

Case Scenario 1, Jones Family

DCF received an anonymous intake which alleged that Malika Jones, mother of three preschoolers, was constantly beating her children. The anonymous caller alleged that she hears the children screaming and crying “all day long” and has observed the mother hitting the children on the buttocks and face with her hand. Yesterday, the oldest child was observed to have a bloody nose after being slapped by the mother. This is the first report received for this family.

Malika, age 26, mother and alleged perpetrator

Diana, age 4, alleged child victim

Francine, age 2 ½, alleged child victim

Marcia, age 14 months, alleged child victim

Case Scenario 2, Olum Family

The hotline intake was based on a report made by an elementary school nurse, expressing concern that nine year old Billy, who is diagnosed with juvenile diabetes, is coming to school without the glucose testing kits that the school nurse is supposed to perform three times a day based on a written agreement with Billy’s father, Marko Olum, and the child’s pediatrician. He is also coming to school with snacks that are high in sugar content which he not supposed to have. The nurse is concerned that Billy will soon suffer serious consequences if the diabetes continues to go unmanaged.

Marko, age 32, father and alleged perpetrator

Billy, age nine, alleged child victim

Case Scenario 3, Juarez Family

The hotline intake was based on a report made by a law enforcement officer. Police were called to the home of the Juarez residence at 3:30 a.m. due to a neighbor calling and reporting that she could hear the mother’s boyfriend yelling and threatening to hurt her. The law enforcement officer arrested the boyfriend when he got to the home because the boyfriend had shoved the mother against the bedroom wall bruising her back. The officer filed a report with the hotline based on “Family Violence Threatens Child.” The mother refused to go to a shelter and remained in the home with her three children after the boyfriend was arrested.

Maria Juarez, mother, age 24

Alanis, age 8

Dominik, age 5

Jayson, age 2

Lab Activity 4: Exploring and Focusing Skills Practice

1. Opening of Interview

- a. Was greeting respectful? How so?
- b. Was purpose explained?
- c. Was personal expression provided?
- d. Was purpose of meeting explained in an understandable way?
- e. If necessary, were immediate concerns addressed effectively?
- f. Any suggested improvements?

2. Information Gathering

- a. Was there appropriate use and mix of listening skills (attending behaviors, reflections, reflections, silence, and exception-finding)?

Examples:

- b. Was there appropriate use and mix of focusing skills (open, closed, indirect, and solution-focused)?

Examples:

3. Was there use of additional engagement skills (reframing, positive feedback, developing discrepancy)?

Examples:

4. Are there any suggested improvements?

Field Observation

Person & Title, Observed: _____

Date and Time of Interview: _____

1. Opening of Interview

- a. Was greeting respectful? How so?

- b. Was purpose explained?

- c. Was personal expression provided?

- d. Was purpose of meeting explained in an understandable way?

- e. If necessary, were immediate concerns addressed effectively?

- f. Any suggested improvements?

2. Information Gathering

- a. Was there appropriate use and mix of listening skills (attending behaviors, reflections, reflections, silence, and exception-finding)?

Examples:

- b. Was there appropriate use and mix of focusing skills (open, closed, indirect, and solution-focused)?

Examples:

- c. Was there use of additional engagement skills (reframing, positive feedback, developing discrepancy)?

Examples:

d. Are there any suggested improvements?