

**Making Case Management Work:  
Empowering People for Change**

Presented by:

The Rockford Area Case Management Initiative

## Empowering Behaviors Checklist

- ✓ When participants present a problem, my first response is a question, not a statement.
- ✓ Let participants think while you lean back and let them work.
- ✓ My participants are doing most of the talking.
- ✓ I ask open thinking questions that begin with who, what, when, where, and how.
- ✓ My participants are writing things down; I keep a pad or note paper at my desk to share.
- ✓ I ask participants for their ideas first before offering mine.
- ✓ I add my ideas only when participants can't think of anything else. I add my suggestions in the form of a question, not a command.
- ✓ I "shut up" and let participants think.
- ✓ When participants ask me what I think they should do, I respond with a thinking question, not a statement.
- ✓ I praise participants for their efforts throughout the conversation.

## Practice Exercise: Case Study

Identify Avis's Motivators, Strengths, Barriers and Resources

- Avis is 45 years old. She recently took on the care of her three grandchildren, ages two, four, and six. They live in a small two bedroom house.
- Her sister and best friend help with the children.
- Avis worked for 20 years as a Nurse's Aide until she hurt her back. She has been out of work for the past two years.
- She frequently cooks for family, friends, and her church.
- Avis has an old car she uses to run errands for people to earn extra money. She has also cared for her ill mother for the past two years.
- Avis dropped out of school in the seventh grade. She does not read and write well.
- She says she is too stressed to do anything now.

<b>MOTIVATORS</b>	<b>STRENGTHS</b>
<b>BARRIERS</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>

# Empowering Words

This exercise will help you look at how to change your words from **helping** words to **empowering** ones. Which response helps? Abandons? Empowers? Pay attention to the words used in each response. When you have chosen the empowering response, underline the words that convey empowerment.

- 1. The participant requests help in moving from a shelter into an apartment.**
  - A. Here are some places you can call.
  - B. I will be happy to work with you on this. Let's make a list of what needs to be done so we can decide who should do each task.
  - C. I will call and see who might have some housing slots available.
  
- 2. You and the participant are working on a plan to go back to school.**
  - A. You need to call the school and set up an appointment.
  - B. Call me when you have figured out what to do.
  - C. What do you think you need to do to get started with school?
  
- 3. The participant is unsure whether to try working and going to school at the same time. She asks you what she should do.**
  - A. It would be best to adjust to the new job first before trying school.
  - B. I realize that this is a tough decision. Let's discuss the pros and cons of each so you can decide.
  - C. You will need to make up your own mind. I can't tell you what to do.
  
- 4. The participant names a number of goals that she has.**
  - A. I think your most important goal should be to find a place to live.
  - B. I am sure you can accomplish whatever you set out to do.
  - C. Of the goals you have named, which three do you think are the most important for you to work on?
  
- 5. The participant asks you to call the Career Center to find out about skills training.**
  - A. Let's work on this together. What questions do you need to ask them?
  - B. I'll call them for you. I know what to ask.
  - C. Here is the number. You can call them

## More Practice Exercises

**Role Play:** Break into pairs. One person will play the role of the participant and one person will play the role of the case manager. The participant should read the “lines” below and the case manager will practice how to respond. The role of the case manager is to ask open, thinking questions to empower and motivate the participant to be the lead partner. **Afterwards swap roles.**

- **Participant:** “I won’t be able to pay rent this month because I lost my job; I thought you could help me pay my rent.”

Case Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

- **Participant:** “I call you all the time because I am new here, I don’t have any help and I don’t know anybody.”

Case Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

- **Participant:** “I have applied for a lot of jobs but no one will consider me because of my criminal background.”

Case Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

Even More Practice....

- **Participant:** I don’t know who to ask for job leads. I thought you would tell me who is hiring.

Case Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

- **Participant:** I was wondering if I could get a ride to work.

Case Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

- **Participant:** Can I get a bus pass?

Case Manager: \_\_\_\_\_