

01 Skills – working agreement and risk assessment

00:00 I suggest we remove the intro and record a separate intro

00:56 Start “First off”

00:58 – check receipt of and understanding of contract/ working agreement and check understanding of how data is managed and stored. The important point is that to be compliant with legislation, a practitioner must gain informed consent.

12:11 – Counsellor **non verbal communication** is apparent, counsellor looking at the camera simulating eye contact. Nodding, soft and open expression,

09:08 pause before counsellor speaks – this empowers client to set the pace – after presenting issue is brought counsellor welcomes the material “that’s okay to bring that” **demonstration that this is a threat free environment** as well as **unconditional positive regard** (you are accepted here)

09:35 **Counsellor uses metaphor** – reminds me of a glass of water and you drop a drip of ink into it from a dropper.

Metaphor is powerful and owned by client.

09:43 Client nods and makes aah sound as the metaphor fits. (very powerful sign)

Client then chooses to own and run with the metaphor and this metaphor comes up a number of times again in the session brought by the client.

Gives client a clarity of seeing their presentation from a different vantage point.

10:01 **counsellor re-focuses on the process of risk assessment** “would you say that’s why you are coming into counselling at the minute”

Client says yes – **this is an appropriate question** that **is directive but needed** as contracting is mandatory to ensure the client understands what is on offer, what they hope to get from the time

This is an admin session, yes it is person centred and yes it is therapeutic but there is a boundary to complete the risk assessment before delving too deep into the presentation.

12:56 Counsellor “its almost like there are 2 sides of you when it comes to this phenomenon. A side that says I know that I am not who I used to be.... But there is also a side that says no I don’t want to be like this anymore. There is a head side and a heart side. This is a great example of dialogical theory, the many voices within. It also highlights the incongruent of I think this, but I feel that. **Skill is focus** on the incongruent

13:30 **paraphrase skill**, counsellor introduces the word haunted – this hits home – client feels heard and refers to skeletons in the closet.

14:25 Counsellor indicates moving on with the risk assessment and asks the direct questions outlined in the risk assessment form. “are you on any medication”

14:39 Counsellor “do you do anything as a coping strategy?”

Client asks for clarification “what do you mean”

Counsellor expands and gives examples “alcohol, drug use” but balances against positive coping strategy “running.

Counsellor “I am interested in how you have been handling this presentation so far” **Direct and explorative question to uncover hidden risks** such as drug and alcohol use”

This exploration **opens the door for this client to share some high risk activities from the past.**

16:24 client mentions his dog and his face lights up. **Non verbal indicator** that this is important to him.

Counsellor matches the smile showing empathic connection. **Non verbal communication** is very powerful and helps with relationship building and trust building in early sessions.

16:52 **Use of silence by counsellor** – 8 seconds may seem very short but in a session it is a good pause. This **silence allows the presentation to soak in,** it **gives breathing space** and **allows space if the client wishes to add something.**

17:34 Counsellor **gentle challenge** in the form of an **open question** “because it’s the same person, it is you, you can’t extend that compassion?”

17:39 client pauses then has a deep sigh – this shows process

17:46 after this challenge, **client’s pace slows,** **he is clearly processing** and **facing the incongruence** of being able to offer compassion to others but not to self.

Up until 18:16 the client continues to wrestle with the incongruence.

18:16 Client says “I am diagnosed autistic...” A presentation like this can be a **great indicator to undertake CPD in a certain area or topic** for greater understanding so we can best serve.

20:22 **Counsellor reflects back** “The love and compassion you give to others, you find it almost impossible to give that to yourself”

20:30 Client “Yes. .. for the past self”

Counsellor “for the past self” **another direct reflection.** Reflection is the client’s own words as they say them reflected back and in this case it helps the counsellor align frame of reference as “past self” is clarified by the client.

20:59 Counsellor **does a summary** “so it adds more to the picture, there is autism and you set a really high bar for ...” **the summary crystallises the client’s presentation** so the **counsellor can clarify if she fully understands.** This is **part of the risk assessment but also part of the relationship building process.**

24:27 Client verbally shows a **change in the process,** looks away and has a “Lightbulb moment” This is notable where a client has such a moment as it can indicate a moment of movement. The **incongruence is challenged** by the client and a “Never” becomes a maybe.

27:12 Counsellor “like you are constantly punishing yourself” 6 words to **focus down on the presenting emotion** then the **counsellor leaves space.** The client gains momentum, feels heard and goes on.

28:40 Counsellor says “you have mentioned the autism, are there any other health issues you would like to talk about” this is **refocus on the purpose of this session** which is risk assessment.

28:50 Counsellor “and who are your main relationships in your life, who is around” Here the **counsellor is checking for support networks that already exist**. Support networks are important at times of vulnerability so understanding what exists is good for assessing risk and planning care.

31:56 Counsellor carefully **clarifies her frame of reference** “so lonely...” pause... “maybe not lonely.., is that right?” The counsellor **checks that loneliness is not present**.

32:45 Counsellor “remember these people in this closed circle if ever you need to reach out” The **counsellor is reinforcing the support network** for the client to access between session. Counsellor **checks if the client feels okay with using the support circle**.

Powerful Moment - The client has just mentioned how accepting the people in the support circle are, how they accept “all of me”.

34:35 Counsellor “its interesting that you should say that, when that is the reason, you are here. That you cant accept all of yourself, the whole of you.”

34:40 - See how the client goes silent, watch his face expression change as this gentle pointing out of the incongruence is brought into awareness.

Client “wow”

Counsellor _uses **skill of silence**

Client – Yeh

35:11 Counsellor **indicates coming to the end of the session** “I only have a few more questions, is that alright” This serves to move the session along to ensure the risk assessment is completed, this also **serves to inform the client the session is nearing the end**.

35:15 Counsellor” are you alright to proceed?” **Counsellor gains consent** after the power of the last interaction before moving to the ending.

37:25 Counsellor “this is quite a sensitive question, have you ever harmed yourself of thought seriously about doing so?”

This is a sensitive question, it needs to be asked to access risk. Note how the **counsellor asks this question when a repot has built**. Note how the **question is asked with over enough time remaining** (10 minutes) of time left to allow for any closing down if a delicate presentation was to arise.

37:40 after the client says “yes” to s self harm question the counsellors asks “would you be okay to tell me about that, or is this not the right moment?” This **puts the decision into the hands of the client and the client holds the power and pace** even in a risk assessment session.

40:52 after the client mentions some past activities around self harming the counsellor opens the door to speak about anything related to the past events, or anything that may come up now. This **leaves an open door invite for the client should anything high risk arise**.

41:16 Counsellor “this is my final question for today” again the ending is acknowledged giving the client indication that the session is ending. Counsellor then asks about any significant life events which is another good risk assessment process.

43:17 Counsellor acknowledges the presentation and summarises the main points of what the client says. Counsellor recaps the presenting issue and then thanks the client for being open.

45:00 Counsellor “are you okay to finish for today”

Client “yes”

The session closes with the counsellor, once again, checking in with the client.